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LIVES OF GREAT MEN ALL REMIND US  
WE CAN MAKE OUR LIVES STILL MORE,



AND, DEPARTING, LEAVE BEHIND US  
FOOTPRINTS ON THE SANDS OF TIME



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*— and —*

THE STORY OF JOHN HOWARD.

*— and —*









**HOWARD AT THE GATE OF THE BASTILLE**

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THE STORY  
OF  
**JOHN HOWARD**

THE PRISON REFORMER



"Where in the dungeon's loathsome shade,  
A speechless captive clanks his chain."

page 53

T. NELSON AND SONS.  
LONDON, EDINBURGH AND NEW YORK.





THE  
STORY OF JOHN HOWARD  
THE PRISON-REFORMER.

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"An arm of aid to the weak,  
A friendly hand to the friendless."

LORD HOUGHTON.



LONDON:  
T. NELSON AND SONS, PATERNOSTER ROW;  
EDINBURGH; AND NEW YORK.

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1876.

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## THE STORY OF JOHN HOWARD.

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### CHAPTER I.

#### INTRODUCTION.

**W**E are not to imagine that life was given to us solely for our individual enjoyment, or even for the performance of our domestic responsibilities. Each one of us, on the contrary, has a duty to discharge towards his fellows; each one of us is bound to remember that his influence extends beyond his personal sphere, beyond his family circle, beyond his neighbourhood; that he is a link in the great chain of society; and that he possesses no means of estimating the full measure of the colouring his thoughts and actions may communicate to *the thoughts and actions of others.* The impetus

given to a single stone will hurl an avalanche down the mountain-side. Drop a pebble into the water, and the circle caused by its fall creates a series of circles, which increase in number and area until they reach the margin of the pool. A sound striking the nearest wave of air sets in motion an atmospheric current which will travel round the world. And so the influence of the individual, more or less directly, touches all humanity; yes, even the unborn races of mankind. You impress your neighbour with sympathies and aspirations, which he, in turn, impresses upon *his* neighbour, and this third agent acts upon a fourth, and the fourth upon a fifth; until the attempt to calculate the long succession of effects resulting from apparently so slight a cause confuses the astonished mind. Life, then, is a mystery which we share with all who have been, who are, or who are to come. We cannot isolate ourselves. It is impossible for us to shut ourselves apart from our "flesh and blood." We cannot say that the seed we sow shall never germinate. And such being the case, it behoves us ever to keep in mind the solemn obligations of our position: so to think, so to speak, so to act, *as that our thoughts, and words, and deeds may*

all contribute to swell the sum of human happiness.

Alas, such a responsibility is very weighty ! It seems almost to exceed our little strength ; and if we would discharge it with any degree of success, we must be careful that we do our duty, —neither more nor less than our duty,—in the state and condition of life in which it has pleased God to place us. This does not mean that we are to make no effort to rise. On the contrary, it must be part of our duty so to do, if opportunity offer ; for opportunities are the gifts of Providence, which it were sinful to neglect. But we are to avoid repining ; we are to put aside sordid ambition. We are to set before ourselves as our life's ideal the honest discharge of our duty towards God and towards our neighbours. Ah, how much is implied in these few simple words ! Patience, and endurance, and courage, and perseverance, and industry ; faith in the Most High ; hopefulness in the present, and confidence in the future ; strict fulfilment of one's promises, loyal adherence to one's words, zealous culture of one's capacities ; a keen sense of one's own unworthiness, and a generous forgiveness of the shortcomings of one's fellows ; love, charity, chivalrous heroism ;—we

shall need all these, and more, if we would acquit ourselves gallantly in the battle of life !

The biographies of great men may assist us in following up our difficult path with steadfast perseverance, if we study them aright, and are prompt to profit by their lessons. There we shall find that those who have most eagerly obeyed the voice of duty rank highest in the roll of fame ; that the world gives of its love and gratitude to the calm enduring spirits who have worked and struggled as in the eye of God and his holy angels ; while for the slaves of pride and ambition, for the slaves of idols and false ideals, it does but reserve a cold applause. Compare the renown of a Watt, a Galileo, a Locke, a Newton, with the "glory" which plays about an Alcibiades, an Alexander, a Charles the Twelfth ! How pure, how lofty the former ; how trivial, how meretricious the latter ! It is, then, only by faithfully and lovingly doing our duty that we shall merit and receive the good-will of our fellow-men. It is thus only we shall earn the eternal fame which hallows the memories of a sage like Franklin, a philosopher like Brewster, a Christian missionary like Xavier, or a philanthropist like Howard.

*It is to the life of the last-named, the life of*

John Howard, we purpose to devote the following pages, convinced that his example cannot be too frequently put before the minds of youth, and that it would be difficult to select a more striking illustration of the true happiness which attends the zealous and unselfish performance of duty,—duty which to the mean soul wears so dread an aspect; but to the patient, humble worker ever smiles with a heavenly radiance!

“ Stern Lawgiver ! yet thou dost wear  
The Godhead’s most benignant grace;  
Nor know we anything so fair  
As is the smile upon thy face:  
Flowers laugh before thee on their beds,  
And fragrance in thy footing treads;  
Thou dost preserve the stars from wrong;  
And the most ancient heavens, through thee, are  
fresh and strong.”

WORDSWORTH, *Ode to Duty*, s. 6.





## CHAPTER II.

### HOWARD'S EARLY YEARS.

**W**ERY little is known, or, at least, very little that is accurate, of the early years of the great Prison Reformer. Even the date of his birth is uncertain. But it would seem to have taken place at Enfield, some time in the year 1726 or 1727. According to other authorities, he was born in 1724 or 1725, at Clapton, Cardington, or Smithfield.

A man's fame, however, does not depend upon his birthplace; and it is as unnecessary as it would be hopeless, in the absence of the original baptismal register, to attempt any reconciliation of, or any too arbitrary choice between, these conflicting accounts. As Mr. Hepworth Dixon reminds us, Howard belonged to no sect exclusively, to no district. His renown cannot be monopolized *by any petty parish*. His glories, like his exer-

tions, are confined by no bounds of district or province; the power of his name and the light of his example are the common heirlooms of mankind.

John Howard, the philanthropist's father, having amassed a considerable fortune as a London tradesman, had retired from business, and settled himself at Clapton, a northern suburb of the metropolis, shortly before his son's birth. Thus we may conjecture that he was somewhat advanced in years when his son was born. Not much is known of his character; but he has come down to us as a pious Protestant Nonconformist, regular in his habits, pure in his life, unobtrusive in his manners, and strict in the management of his household.

If we know little of Howard's father, unfortunately we know still less of his mother. We say unfortunately, because most men who have attained fame have owed their higher qualities to their mother, and one would have been glad to trace her influence on the character and temperament of her son. It is hinted that she was of the "Martha" type; a woman troubled and careful about many things, with all her energies concentrated on the performance of her household duties.



She had but two children : John, of whom we are writing, and a daughter, whose birth she did not long survive. Mr. Howard married a second time, but had no issue, and his second wife lived but for a few months.

At a very early age young Howard, who was of a frail and sickly constitution, was entrusted to the care of a farmer, named Prole, who lived at Cardington, near Bedford, and rented a small estate there of Mr. Howard. Here the future philanthropist spent his childhood ; and here, subsequently, attracted by the happy memories of his youthful years, he purchased a considerable property, and made his principal residence.

In due time he was sent to a Dissenters' school at Hertford, conducted by Mr. John Worsely. After spending some years to little profit, he was removed to a school in London, under Mr. John Cames, a man of unusual acquirements in literature, theology, and science. With this tutor he remained until he was sixteen, but, owing to a slow intellectual development, or the effects of a feeble constitution, he made but indifferent progress in his studies. On leaving school, he would appear to have possessed little scholastic learning—*little Latin, and less Greek* ; but he had a fair

acquaintance with English literature, wrote English passably, and had some command of French. He was ignorant of even the very elements of science ; but his knowledge of the politics, geography, history, and condition of foreign countries, was unusually full. Though not a scholar, he was evidently well-informed ; and the defects of his education may partly be attributed to the causes already mentioned, and partly to the circumstance that his father intended him to follow the same vocation as himself ; a vocation in which an acquaintance with the ancient classics, however desirable, is not necessary.

By way of pointing a moral, we may recommend our young readers to make as good use of their time as Howard made of his, if they cannot do better ; and to reach quite as high a standard of knowledge, though they may reasonably attain to a higher.

We next find Howard bound as an apprentice to the firm of Newham and Shipley, wholesale grocers in Watling Street, London. That he might be carefully initiated into every branch of the business, and at the same time treated in a manner becoming his future social position, his father paid the unusually large premium of £700.

It is no wonder that he was allowed various indulgences not altogether adapted to his status as an apprentice—such as his own private apartments, a valet, and a couple of riding horses. And it is no wonder that, having such indulgences, he should acquire a decided distaste for business, and seize the earliest opportunity of freeing himself from its trammels. His father died on the 9th of September 1742, dividing his personal property between his son and daughter, and leaving to the former, on his attaining his majority, the whole of his landed estates. He availed himself of his new fortune to purchase his liberty from Messrs. Newnham and Shipley, and terminate the contract into which he had entered with them.

Though he had not reached his majority, his father's executors, in their well-deserved reliance on his prudence and discretion, immediately entrusted him with a large share of the management of his property. One of his first duties was to superintend the repairs of his father's residence at Clapton. For this purpose he visited it every other day, and in connection with these visits a pleasant anecdote is told.

An old man, who had been gardener to the *elder Mr. Howard* for many years, and who con-

tinued in that situation until the son let the house, would often relate, in his old age, as an instance of his young master's punctuality and charitableness of disposition, that he never failed to be at the long buttressed wall, separating the garden from the high road, exactly as the baker's cart went by; when he just as regularly purchased a loaf, threw it over the wall, and, entering the garden, would say good-humouredly, "Harry, look among the cabbages, and you will find something for your family."

As soon as he came of age, Howard, desirous of improving his mind by the study of men and manners, set out on a tour through France and Italy. He was absent nearly two years, and returned to England in 1745,—not only intellectually, but physically benefited. The contemplation of the fine memorials of antiquity and the exquisite works of modern art which embellish the great and glorious cities of Italy, could not but enlarge his sympathies and refine his taste; while the genial climate of Southern Europe recruited his frame and reinvigorated his energies.

He did not fail to use his advantages, we are told, as an educated man and a man of fortune: so far as he was able, he visited every gallery

and exhibition of note. Nor was he content with merely studying the many marvels of skill and beauty, the masterpieces of painter and sculptor, which everywhere met his delighted gaze ; so far as his means permitted, he became a purchaser of them. In this, as in his later travels on the Continent—except, indeed, in those philanthropic enterprises which wholly engrossed his heart and mind, his feelings and his thoughts—he collected numerous paintings and antiques, with which he afterwards adorned his favourite residence at Cardington.





### CHAPTER III.

#### EXPERIENCES OF HIS MANHOOD.

**T**HOUGH he returned to England in 1745 with his health considerably improved, he was still so much of an invalid that the air of the country was necessary to him. Accordingly, he took lodgings at Stoke Newington,—then a pleasant village, within easy distance of the metropolis,—and, entering upon a strict regimen prescribed by his physicians, devoted his leisure to the agreeable task of mental cultivation. The subjects of his study were the less abstruse branches of natural philosophy, and the theory of medicine. An attack of nervous fever reduced him to a condition of great debility, but his abstemious diet and quiet living rescued him from danger. The attention he received during his long illness from his landlady, a woman of cheerful disposition and active habits, so won upon

him, that he asked her to become his wife. As she was more than double his age, and scarcely less an invalid than himself, she promptly refused; but he pressed his suit with an urgency which would not be denied. In 1752 they were married, and for three years they lived together very happily. She appears to have been in every way worthy of the attachment she had inspired, an attachment founded upon respect rather than upon love; and on her death, in 1755, Howard felt her loss so greatly that he abruptly broke up the establishment he had formed at Stoke Newington, and sought consolation in travel.

The terrible earthquake of 1755 had just involved the fair city of Lisbon in ruin, and Howard determined upon visiting the scene of an event so unusual and appalling. He embarked on board the packet *Hanover* early in 1756, but before she got clear of the Channel she was captured by a French privateer—France and England were then at war—and her crew and passengers, after being kept without food or water for forty hours, were thrown into the dungeons of the castle of Brest. There they were kept for some time longer in the agonies of hunger and thirst; and when at length *a joint of mutton* was churlishly flung into their

midst, they were obliged, for want of a knife, to tear it in pieces and gnaw it like dogs. His first insight into the horrors of prison-life as they then existed,—horrors of which it is almost impossible for the present generation to conceive an accurate idea,—is thus described by himself in studiously simple and unexaggerated language :—

“In the castle at Brest I lay six nights upon straw; and observing how cruelly my countrymen were used there, and at Morlaix, whither I was carried next, during the two months I was at Carpaix upon parole, I corresponded with the English prisoners at Brest, Morlaix, and Dinan; at the last of these towns were several of our ship’s crew, and my servant. I had sufficient evidence of their being treated with such barbarity that many hundreds had perished, and *that thirty-six were buried in a hole at Dinan in one day.* When I came to England, still on parole, I made known to the commissioners of sick and wounded seamen the sundry particulars, which gained their attention and thanks. Remonstrance was made to the French court; our sailors had redress, and those that were in the three prisons mentioned above were brought home in the first cartel ships.\*

\* Ships carrying a flag of truce, and employed in the exchange of prisoners. The French word *cartel* strictly means “a challenge.”



A lady from Ireland, who married in France, had bequeathed in trust with the magistrates of St. Maloes sundry charities, one of which was a penny a day to every English prisoner of war at Dinan. This was duly paid, and saved the lives of many brave and useful men."

On obtaining his freedom Howard returned to England, and took up his residence on his estate at Cardington, in Bedfordshire. Here he occupied himself in works of benevolence, which bore witness to the natural humanity of his character, the warmth of his heart, and his breadth of sympathy. The peasantry on his estate were comfortably housed, fairly paid, and provided with constant employment; while, both from his example and teaching, they learned habits of industry, order, and frugality to which they had previously been unaccustomed. No poor man was turned away from his gate unrelieved. The sufferer was soothed by words of compassion; the sick received advice and assistance. Howard, in truth, was all that a country gentleman should be; his beneficial influence, like the light of the sun, radiated to every object within its sphere, fertilizing, brightening, blessing.

*On the 2nd of May 1758, he married a second*

time. His wife was Henrietta Leeds, a lady of considerable personal attractions, about his own age, with a well-cultivated mind, and of sound religious principles. She heartily co-operated with him in his earnest endeavours to improve the condition of the rural population, and won the affection and respect of all who came into contact with her.

A pleasing sketch of Howard's life-work at this period is given by his friend Dr. Aikin, and it shows that Howard had mastered the great secret of a conscientious career: he did thoroughly whatever he had to do, and he did the duty which he found immediately at hand. Some men seem always in want of an aim, an object. They wander through life restless and uncertain, complaining that they have not found their right sphere of labour. But if they were content at first to take up the work which lay nearest to them, however inappropriate it might seem, or however uncongenial they might find it, depend upon it, reader, the *right* work would, in due time, present itself. There is a place in this world for everybody, and our motto should be, Everybody for his place; but, unfortunately, we are apt to cherish exaggerated notions of our capabilities.

and, yielding to vague dreams and feverish visions, to seek any and every position but the one which God has fitted us to fill!

Dr. Aikin defines it to have been the capital object of Howard's ambition that the poor in his village should be the most orderly in their manners, the neatest in their persons and habitations, and possessed of the greatest share of the comforts of life, that could be met with in any part of England. And as it was his disposition, he says, to carry everything he undertook to the greatest pitch of perfection, so he spared no pains or expense to effect his purpose. He began by erecting on his estate a number of neat cottages, to each of which was annexed a plot of garden-ground. In this project, according to Dr. Aikin, he was nobly seconded by his admirable wife. "I remember his relating that once, having settled his accounts at the close of a year, and found a balance in his favour, he proposed to his wife to make use of it in a journey to London, or any other gratification she chose. "What a pretty cottage it would build!" was her answer; and the money was so employed. We learn, from the same authority, that the comfortable habitations *thus established* on his estates he was careful to

people with the most sober and industrious tenants he could find, whom he furnished with regular employment, assisted in sickness and distress, and whose children he helped to educate. He enforced the condition that they should regularly attend their respective places of worship, and abstain from immoral and pernicious amusements. The result was that Cardington, from being one of the poorest and wretchedest villages in the kingdom, became a little Eden, an oasis in the wilderness.

On the 27th of March 1765, Howard's wife gave birth to a son : four days afterwards she suddenly passed away. It has been well said that no tongue can tell, no pen describe, the misery which fell upon her bereaved husband. Like many undemonstrative men, he was capable of profound affection, and there can be no doubt that he had accumulated upon her all the treasures of his love. Heavily, therefore, fell the unexpected blow. The iron went home to his soul. The sunniest side of life was thenceforth, to Howard, all black and clouded. But he submitted to the Divine will with the resignation of a pious heart, and endeavoured to console himself in his sorrow by scrupulous attention to the training and education of his only son.

For such a task, however, he was neither fitted by character nor experience, and he laid too much stress on the cultivation of the faculties of the intellect to the neglect of the proper development of the sympathies of the heart. Howard's system of management did not answer well, and his son's later career was a source of infinite sorrow and disappointment to him.

In 1769, his health failing, he resolved upon another visit to the Continent. Landing at Calais, he went through France to Geneva, and thence, after a residence of a few weeks, proceeded to Milan. He then went on to Turin, where his strength was so rapidly restored, that he abandoned his intention of wintering in Italy. Some of the reasons which actuated him in this decision he has recorded in his diary, and as they are strongly illustrative of his sincere and unaffected piety, we transcribe them :—

"TURIN, 1769, November 30.

"My return without seeing the southern parts of Italy was after much deliberation. I feared a misimprovement of a talent spent for mere curiosity, at the loss of many Sabbaths ; and as many donations must be suspended for my pleasure, which would have been, as I hope, contrary to the general conduct of my life, and which, on a retrospective view on my death-bed, would cause pain as unbecoming a *disciple of Christ*, whose mind should be formed in my soul.

These thoughts, with distance from my dear boy, determine me to check my curiosity. Oh, why should vanity and folly, pictures and baubles, or even the stupendous mountains, beautiful hills, or rich valleys, which ere long will all be consumed, engross the thoughts of a candidate for an everlasting kingdom—a worm ever to crawl on earth, whom God has raised to the hope of glory, which ere long will be revealed to them who are washed and sanctified by faith in the blood of the Divine Redeemer! Look forward, O my soul! how low, how mean, how little is everything but what has a view to that glorious world of light, life, and love! The preparation of the heart is of God. Prepare the heart, O God, of thy unworthy creature, and unto thee be all the glory through the boundless ages of eternity!

(Signed) "J. H.

"This night my trembling soul almost longs to take its flight, to see and know the wonders of redeeming love—join the triumphant choir—sin and sorrow fled away—God my Redeemer all in all—oh! happy spirits that are safe in those mansions!"

But before Howard had accomplished more than half his homeward journey, his enfeebled health compelled him to return to the warm airs and sunny skies of the Land of the South. He visited Florence and Rome, whose mighty ruins moved him to admiration; Naples, Mount Vesuvius, Leghorn, Pisa, and Venice. Thence he crossed the Alps, and through the romantic scenes of the Tyrol pushed forward to Munich. After a short residence in that classical city, he descended the

enchanted and enchanting Rhine to Rotterdam, where he took ship for England.

In 1771 we find him once more at Cardington, but suffering still from his various disorders. A visitor about this time gives us an interesting glimpse of his home-life :—

“He was not disposed to talk much ; he sat but a short time at table, and was in motion during the whole day. On the Sabbath he ate little or no dinner, and spent the interval between divine services in a private room, alone. He had prayers in his family every morning and evening. He was very abstemious, lived chiefly upon vegetables, and drank no wine or spirits. He hated praise ; and when his works of benevolence were once mentioned, he spoke of them slightly, as a ‘whim of his,’ and immediately changed the subject.”

Hitherto, as we have seen, Howard, though doing his duty as a Christian and a country gentleman, had not fallen in with any special work fitted to develop the dormant energies of his character. Had we to close our biography here, the reader might well inquire, Why was it written ? For Howard so far, notwithstanding *the virtues of his life*, has shown himself in no

way superior, we are glad to say, to the great majority of the "gentlemen of England." But in 1773 an apparently accidental circumstance—though in the Divine order of events nothing is really accidental—opened up for him a new career; opened up to him an enterprise exactly adapted to the measure of his powers, to his perseverance, strict sense of duty, and fervent benevolence. He was appointed High Sheriff of Bedfordshire; and looking around him to master the responsibilities of his high office, he was struck by the ill condition of the prisons of the county. Further inquiry led to revelations of the barbarities practised within their walls which shocked his sensitive nature, and to exposures of illegal and iniquitous customs, whose existence we now-a-days are almost unable to realize. As, for instance, in Bedford jail, the two dungeons for felons were both eleven feet below the surface of the ground; so that the walls and floors—and on the latter the wretched inmates slept—were always damp, and sometimes quite wet. There was but one courtyard for both sexes. Moreover, a person imprisoned for debt, after he had arranged with the creditor who had imprisoned him, could not obtain his liberty unless he was prepared to pay to jailer



and turnkey a sum of between seventeen and eighteen shillings. Unless this fee was forthcoming, he was thrust back into his cell, literally to *rot*—for in those days that common but seemingly monstrous expression had “the naked and terrible significance of truth.” The same cruelty was meted out to persons accused of crime, when pronounced *innocent*; so that a poor man, for being innocent, might suffer a life-long imprisonment! Add to these considerations the then appalling severity of our criminal code, and we need not wonder that, after a further investigation of the horrors of the prison-world, Howard’s generous spirit inspired him to undertake a new crusade.

In order to fit himself for the work, he visited most of the jails of England.

At Leicester he found that debtors, whose only offence, in most cases, was their wretched poverty, were confined in a damp, dark, underground dungeon, with two small holes—the larger not exceeding twelve inches square—to let in air and light.

At Nottingham the jail was built on the slope of a hill; down about five-and-twenty steps were three rooms for the accommodation of those who could pay an extravagant fee. The poorer, and *therefore* the more honest, were compelled to

descend another twelve steps into a series of cells cut in the solid rock for their reception, one of which only was in use at the time of Howard's visit, —a cavern 21 feet long, 30 feet broad, and 7 feet high. Here human beings lingered through the best part of a lifetime ; and here, after a long and undeserved captivity, they not infrequently died.

At Lichfield jail the rooms were small and close; no yard, no straw, no water.

At Gloucester the Castle had but one court for all classes of prisoners, and one day-room for both males and females. In the debtors' wards windows were wholly wanting, a part of the plaster-wall being broken through to admit the light. The whole prison had not been whitewashed for years, and was in great need of repair. Many persons had died in the preceding year, owing to a fever engendered, it was believed, by a large dunghill which stood directly opposite to the stairs leading into the sleeping-room !

The prison of Salisbury had only one yard, and no day-room at all, either for felons or debtors. Immediately outside the prison-gate a large chain was passed through an iron staple fixed in the wall, and at either end a debtor, padlocked by

the leg, stood, selling to the passers-by purses, nets, laces, and other articles of jail manufacture, as Bunyan had done at Bedford during his long sufferings for conscience' sake. Another curious custom prevailed at Salisbury : prisoners, securely chained together, were sent into the city at Christmas time to beg ; one carrying a box for money, another a basket to receive donations of provisions.

For another painful picture let us turn to York Castle.

Here the courtyard was small, and without water, the pump being ingeniously placed just outside the palisades. Water, consequently, had to be carried in by the servants of the establishment ; a circumstance which explained the unutterable squalor and filthiness of the place. When we remember that means of ventilation were in those days exceedingly imperfect, we must pronounce a cell  $7\frac{1}{2}$  long,  $6\frac{1}{2}$  feet wide, and  $8\frac{1}{2}$  feet high, as dangerously small : in fact, each cell contained only about 414 cubic feet of air, or thirty-six hours' consumption for *one* individual. Moreover, they were close and dark ; air and light being admitted either through a hole about four inches by eight, over the door, or through half a

dozen perforations of an inch or so in diameter. Yet in these horrible dungeons *three* human individuals were commonly locked up for the night, which, in winter, lasted fourteen to sixteen hours.

There could be no wonder, as Dixon says, that the fell Destroyer was so busy in this jail! For into these loathsome holes the wretched prisoners were nightly thrust, with only a damp floor, barely covered by a thin layer of straw, for their bed of rest; while a sewer, running through one of the passages, rendered them still more offensive and pernicious.

The infirmary for the sick consisted of a single room; so that when it was occupied by an inmate of one sex, the sick of the other, should there be any—as was frequently the case—lingered in their noisome dens until death relieved them from their misery.

A case of this kind came under Howard's personal observation. At the time of his visit a woman was ill, and, of course, occupied the infirmary; a man was afterwards seized with the "distemper,"—which, at that period, was the permanent scourge of every prison in Great Britain,—but was forced to remain, despite his sufferings, in his fever-infected dungeon.

Does the reader want any more facts, or is he convinced that Prison Reform was a work well worthy of the courage, benevolence, and piety of John Howard? Let him accompany us, however, on a visit to the jail at Ely. The building, to begin with, was in so ruinous a condition as to be unfitted for the reception of prisoners; hence, to insure their safe custody, the wardens chained them on their backs to the floor, passing over them several bars of iron, and fastening an iron collar, covered with spikes, round their necks, as well as placing a heavy bar of the same metal over their legs. The keeper received no salary, but extorted as much as he could from the poor wretches under his charge; there was no surgeon to attend upon the sick, no chaplain to minister to minds diseased. Neither felons nor debtors received any fixed allowance of food: to the use of the former a small court—*without* water, but *with* a sewer—was appropriated; the latter had no free ward, and were even deprived of straw to lie on.

Sick at heart, yet resolved to do what in him lay to bring about a reformation of such awful evils, Howard proceeded on his tour of inspection, visiting prison after prison. From Ely he

went to Norwich, from Norwich to Ipswich, from Ipswich to Colchester, from Colchester to London. Next he determined to visit the west of England, and we find him in succession at Exeter, Launceston, Ilchester, Bristol, Hereford.

His extraordinary exertions, meanwhile, had attracted the attention of several members of Parliament. It was felt that the condition of its prisons was a scandal and a reproach to the country. A Committee of Inquiry was appointed, and Howard was summoned to give evidence before it. The answers he gave to the questions put to him were so full, clear, and exact, that a vote of thanks was accorded to him by the House of Commons. This was an honour Howard had never expected to receive; and though he doubtlessly felt adequately recompensed for his labours by the approval of his own conscience, yet so gratifying a testimony to their usefulness he could not undervalue; and we may well believe that it stimulated him to persevere in the good work he had undertaken. We are none of us insensible, and, indeed, no rightly constituted mind ever will be insensible, to the approbation of our fellows; nor is there anything selfish or improper in the desire of *fame*.



## CHAPTER IV.

### THE PRISON-REFORMER.

**E**ARLY in 1774, Howard resumed his enterprise with fresh energy. From London he travelled north to Durham, Newcastle, Morpeth, Carlisle; everywhere meeting with startling evidence of the wretched condition of the poor prisoner, who fared equally ill whether he was guilty or innocent, a criminal or a debtor. Having visited the jails of Westmoreland and Lancaster, he proceeded to Liverpool and then to Chester. Chester Castle, the county jail, he thus describes :—

“ This castle is the property of the king. The first room is a hall or chapel. Down eighteen steps is a small court, which was common to debtors and felons. It is lately divided ; but the high close pales which separate the two courts, *now so very small*, deprive both debtors and

felons of the benefit of fresh air. The former, in their free-ward, the Pope's kitchen; the latter, in their day-room, the King's kitchen. Both these are six steps below the court: near the former is the condemned room. Under the Pope's kitchen is a dark room or passage; the descent to it is by twenty-one steps from the court. No window; not a breath of fresh air; only two apertures with grates in the ceiling into the Pope's kitchen above. On one side of it are six cells (*stalls*), each about eight feet by three, with a barrack bedstead, and an aperture over the door about eight inches by four. In each of these are locked up at night sometimes three or four felons. They pitch these dungeons two or three times a year: when I was in one of them, I ordered the door to be shut, and my situation brought to mind what I had heard of the Black Hole at Calcutta."

On his way homewards the untiring philanthropist revisited the prisons at Stafford, Derby, Nottingham, Northampton, and Leicester. After enjoying a week's repose at Cardington, he travelled into Kent, and examined the offensive jails of Canterbury, Maidstone, and Rochester. Again he appeared in London, and at Clerkenwell found



a condition of things existing which deeply moved his indignation. At the Fleet he was surprised by the scandalous neglect of all discipline, and the shameful violation of all morality.

"They also play in the court," he says, "at skittles, mississippi, fives, tennis, and other games; and not only the prisoners: I saw among them several butchers and others from the market, who are admitted here, as at any other public house. The same may be seen in many other prisons *where the jailer keeps or lets the tap!*

"Besides the inconvenience of this to prisoners, the frequenting a prison lessens the dread of being confined in one. On Monday night there was a wine club; on Thursday night, a beer club—each lasting usually till one or two in the morning. I need not say how much riot these occasion, and how the sober prisoners, and those that are sick, are annoyed by them.

"Seeing the prison crowded with women and children, I procured an accurate list of them, and found that when there were 243 prisoners, their wives and children were 475."

Scenes not less disgraceful and demoralizing took place at the Bridewell, the King's Bench, the Compter: in fact, instead of being places for

the punishment or reformation of criminals, they were nurseries of vice and dens of iniquity.

Indefatigable in his labours of benevolence and charity, Howard next directed his steps towards Wales. Here he visited Flint and Ruthin, Carnarvon and Dolgelly, Montgomery and Presteign ; and on his return, the prisons of Ludlow, Worcester, and Oxford.

In some of the county jails he observed a number of poor creatures whose aspect was peculiarly deplorable ; and asking the cause of their wretched appearance, he was told " they were lately brought from the bridewells." The answer induced him to extend the scope of his inquiries. He resolved to inspect the bridewells, and for that purpose travelled over the ground he had already so carefully explored ; examining houses of correction, and city and town jails, penetrating into recesses and obscure corners which were seldom illumined by the light of law or justice. In many of them, as well as in the county jails, his heart was deeply grieved by sights of misery ; but his attention was principally fixed by the jail-fever and small-pox, which carried off hundreds of victims among debtors as well as felons, the unfortunate as well as the criminal. For to both was

meted out the same measure ; and the pauper, thrown into prison for a debt of a few shillings, was treated with as much severity as the brutal outcast accused of robbery or violence or taking away life. In truth, the latter fared better than the former ; and a Claude Duval or a Jack Shepherd or a Dick Turpin, notwithstanding his low profligacy and many crimes, was feasted and patronized as if he had achieved something for the good of his fellows.

Howard inspected the bridewell at Marlborough. He found all the rooms situated on the ground-floor, and rendered most offensive, especially the men's night-room, by a sewer which traversed the interior of the building. There was no court ; no water accessible to prisoners ; no straw. For petty offenders there was no allowance ; but for *felons*, two pennyworth of bread a day.

Yet some writers there are who can lament the "good old times," when such things could be and not provoke the nation's wonder ! Instead of indulging in sentimental regrets for a past which, notwithstanding its picturesque externals, was so full of rottenness and vice within, would it not be wiser if they did their utmost to enlighten and *improve the present*, so that the future may show

as glorious an advance upon *it*, as *it* shows upon the past? We must not stand still. A great work has been accomplished since Howard died, and the world is better, and brighter, and happier than it was in his day. But progress is the law of humanity, and we must press forward to the radiant heights which shine beyond with the light of love and truth and faith; remembering that each of us, in his sphere, can effect much towards the general advancement by adding to the happiness and consulting the welfare of his neighbours. Stone upon stone; a column here, and a buttress there; each doing the work that lies close to his hand; and so the stately structure will rise higher and higher, day by day, until its topmost towers touch those eternal heavens to which our hearts are for ever aspiring!

Howard continued to persevere in his mission of mercy. He frequently met with a harsh reception, but he was not to be daunted by a churlish countenance or coarse speech. He went to Haverfordwest, and Caermarthen, and Usk, and Berkeley, and Bristol. And let the reader recollect that travelling in 1774 was infinitely more wearisome and difficult than in 1874, and that

the tour which now seems so agreeable, and which we accomplish in a few hours, was then protracted over many days, and attended by inconveniences of which we can scarcely form a conception. It is astonishing that Howard's frail constitution could endure such incessant labour; that his energies did not give way under the burden he imposed upon them. He was supported, however, by the consciousness that he was labouring alike in the service of God and man; and it may be said, without irreverence, that when our Maker finds us a work to do, he invariably finds us the strength with which to do it.

In the autumn of 1774 his researches were pushed to Taunton, Bridgewater, Exeter, Bodmin, Plymouth. Here is his simple but touching description of the town jail at the last-named city:—

“Two rooms for felons; and a large room above for debtors. One of the former, the *clink*, 17 feet by 8, about  $5\frac{1}{2}$  feet high, with a wicket in the door 7 inches by 5, to admit light and air. To this, as I was informed, three men who were confined near two months under sentence of transportation, *came by turns for breath*. The door had not been opened for five weeks, when I with

difficulty entered to see a pale inhabitant. He had been there ten weeks, under sentence of transportation; and he said he had much rather have been hanged than confined in that noisome cell. No water; no sewer; no court. The jailers live distant; they are the three sergeants at mace. Fees, 15s. 10d.; no table. Allowance to debtors, none but on application; felons, two-pennyworth of bread a day. No straw."

A week later, and Howard was in Dorsetshire. Thence he passed into Wiltshire and Hampshire; and after two months of painful and wearisome investigation—having traversed fifteen counties, and inspected about fifty prisons—he returned to Cardington to enjoy the rest he so greatly needed.

His enthusiastic spirit, however, soon triumphed over physical fatigue; and before the end of the year he resumed his enterprise, travelling through the counties of York, Lancaster, and Warwick.

In 1775 he commenced a tour of prison inspection in Scotland and Ireland; but if he made, as he doubtlessly *did* make, notes of what he saw during his excursion, they have not been preserved. It is known, however, that at Glasgow his philanthropic labours were honoured with public re-

cognition, and the freedom of the city was presented to him.

By this time, as one of his biographers remarks, Howard had ascertained the condition of the principal prisons in Great Britain. He had not only made himself acquainted with the enormities perpetrated in many of them, but had observed in all the most deplorable laxity of discipline. His own repugnance to the cruelties he had discovered led him, not unnaturally, though much too sanguinely, to believe that if made known to the proper authorities, they would be immediately put down; and that, when once a reign of mercy was introduced, the needed sanitary and moral improvements would quickly be accomplished. It was a new world, so to speak, in which his active philanthropy had found a sphere of labour; and in the course of his investigations had received ample proof of the general ignorance which prevailed in reference to their subject. He determined, therefore, to publish the results of his experience, and to suggest such amendments in the economy of the prisons as he hoped would correct its gravest defects. He recollected the adage, however, which tells us that "more

haste" is "worse speed;" and desirous of fully mastering the conditions of his difficult subject, he resolved, before he published, to ascertain if any useful facts could be obtained abroad.

On this new, romantic, but glorious crusade, in which he was both leader and host, general and army, Howard entered in April 1775. Reaching Paris, the first place he visited was the gloomy and terrible Bastille, which, beyond all the prisons of Europe, perhaps, was rendered gloomy by associations of tyranny, suffering, guilt, despair, and misery. Within its dreadful precincts, however, Howard was not permitted to enter; but he gained admission to the other prisons of Paris—the Grand Châtelet, the Petit Châtelet, Fort L'Évêque, and the Bicêtre. He found them better managed than those of England. However rigorous the administration of the laws might be, he thought the great care and attention which the French paid to their prisons worthy of all commendation. "All fresh and clean," he wrote; "no jail distemper, no prisoner ironed;" and a larger bread allowance than in the best of the English jails.

From Paris Howard proceeded to Brussels, and from Brussels to Ghent, where he was much im-



pressed by the admirable arrangements of the *Maison de Force*. He found much to praise, also, at Bruges, Rotterdam, the Hague, Amsterdam. At the last-named city he was surprised by the small number of prisoners for debt. The population was 25,000, and yet there were but eighteen debtors. And why? Because, he writes, when one is imprisoned, the creditor must pay the jailer for his maintenance. Another reason: The situation was held to be very disgraceful. A third, and perhaps the principal: The great care taken to train up the children of the poor, and indeed of *all* classes, to habits of industry.

A glimpse of prison-life, as Howard saw it in the Spinning House at Amsterdam, will probably interest the reader.

The prison was reserved for the reception of women only. The visitor found in it a number of criminals, some of whom had led the most abandoned lives, sitting in the presence of the mother, quiet and orderly, at their different sorts of work. The hours of labour were from six to twelve, and one to eight. "I saw them go," says Howard, "from work to dinner. The keeper, or *father*, as they call him, presided. First, they *sang a psalm*; then they went down in order to

a neat dining-room, where they seated themselves at two tables, and several dishes of boiled barley, agreeably sweetened, were set before them. The father struck with a hammer ; then, in profound silence, all stood up, and one of them read, with propriety, a prayer, about four or five minutes. They then sat down cheerful ; and each filled her bowl from a large dish which contained enough for four of them. Then one brought, on a waiter, slices of bread and butter, and served each prisoner. The mother was seated at a desk (where she had a full view of her family at work) with a Bible before her."

Here, then, it was evident that the authorities aimed at something more than the *punishment*—namely, the *reformation*—of the law-breakers.

In Germany the first prison visited by Howard was at Bremen. Next he repaired to Hamburg, and thence to Lunenburg, Zell, Hesse-Cassel, Mannheim, Mentz. At Mentz he found that most of the flour used in the city was ground at a mill in the prison—the delinquents working at it two hours in the morning, and two in the afternoon. Over the door was carved a waggon, drawn by two stags, two lions, and two wild boars ; and an inscription explained the device to mean, that

if wild beasts can be tamed to the yoke, we should not despair of reclaiming men of irregular lives.

The results of Howard's Continental investigations seem to us very fairly summed up by Mr. Hepworth Dixon. They are results which are now recognized in our prison system, and accepted by every political economist; so frequently do we find the *truths* which are slowly comprehended by one century, regarded as familiar *truisms* by the next.

In almost every country of the Continent which Howard had yet visited, he had found the prisoners EMPLOYED; and this was the great and all-important point of contrast with the usage in England. In fact, hard work was the chief correctional agent at that time in operation abroad; while in England the thing aimed at was not correction, but confinement. In several foreign cities he found the criminals toiling and moiling in sight of the general public. "As their crimes had been aggressions upon society," says Dixon, "so, under the surveillance of the corporate body which they had wronged, were they compelled to make atonement for, and compensation by, their labour; being employed in rough, hard, menial work. For the greater part, they were occupied in clean-

ing the streets, repairing the highways, cutting stone, and so forth. Nor did the humane and judicious inspector discover that any ill consequences flowed from these open-day punishments. The labour so obtained was useful in some degree to the state. It inured the culprit to habits of unceasing industry ; and it had a wholesome effect upon those classes of the community from which the criminal population springs."

In considering the claims of Howard to be ranked among the great men whom the world delights to honour, the reader must not forget that he was something more than a sentimental philanthropist, who went from prison to prison, listening to the tale of sorrow, but did nothing for its relief. He was an active and practical reformer, who laboured, while improving the circumstances of the prisoner, to convert his prison discipline into an agency of moral reformation. Every criminal rescued from the thralldom of vice, and taught to walk in the paths of honesty and virtue, is a distinct gain to society ; and Howard, therefore, has a double title to our gratitude as well as to our admiration.

No sooner had he landed at Dover, on his re-  
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turn, than he resumed his persevering inquiries into the condition of the English prisons. They were rewarded, as usual, by the discovery of some startling facts. At Chelmsford, divine service had not been performed for upwards of a year. The warnings and consolations of the gospel had thus been withheld from the sinful hearts which so sorely stood in need of them ! Happily, however, his influence was already beginning to make itself felt. He was clothed with no official authority, but men instinctively recognized the grandeur of his mission. No good work is ever done in vain ; and the suggestions which he freely threw out were adopted in many prisons with a success which proved their wisdom. It was known, too, that nothing escaped his vigilant eye ; that nothing could overcome his sense of duty ; and that behind him were rapidly marshalling those irresistible forces of PUBLIC OPINION which the most powerful sovereigns cannot afford to defy. So he had the satisfaction of finding that at Appleby and Norwich, Maidstone and Horsham, his plans of prison reform had been cordially taken up, and were being honestly carried out. Even in the metropolis the power of John Howard the *philanthropist* could prevail over vested interests

and official ignorance. Orders had been given for rebuilding Newgate.

"The builders of *old* Newgate," says Howard, "seem to have regarded in their plan nothing but the single article of keeping prisoners in safe custody. The rooms and cells were so close as to be almost the constant seats of disease and sources of infection, to the destruction of multitudes, not only in the prison, but abroad. The city had, therefore, very good reason for their resolution to build a new jail; but it has some manifest errors. It is now too late to point out particulars. All I say is, that, without more than ordinary care, the prisoners in it will be in great danger of the jail-fever.

"The cells built in old Newgate a few years since, for condemned malefactors, are intended for the same use at present. I shall, therefore, give some account of them. There are upon each of the three floors five cells, all vaulted, near nine feet high to the crown. In the upper part of each cell is a window, double-grated, near three feet by one and a half. The doors are four inches thick. The strong stone wall is lined all round each cell with planks, studded with broad-headed nails. In each cell is a barrack-bedstead. I was

told by those who attended me, that criminals who had affected an air of boldness during their trial, and appeared quite unconcerned at the pronouncing of sentence upon them, were struck with horror, and shed tears, when brought to these darksome, solitary abodes.....I went twice to prayers there. The few prisoners who were present seemed attentive ; but we were disturbed by the noise in the court. Surely, they who will not go to chapel—who are by far the greatest number—should be locked up in their rooms during the time of divine service, and not suffered to hinder the edification of such as are better disposed.”

Having completed his examination into the condition of the metropolitan prisons, and of those of Kent and Surrey, Howard resolved on another visit to the Continent, to see if any additional lessons were to be gained in the way of prison-reform. He found, however, that the jails of provincial France were no better than those of provincial England, notwithstanding the superiority of the prisons of Paris to those of London. Great was the contrast in republican Switzerland. There most of the reforms were in actual operation *which, in England, have been adopted within a*

comparatively recent period. The felons were kept each in his separate cell, that they might not plot together, or instruct one another in the ways of evil. None were in irons; and the cells, though secure, were healthy and lightsome. In most of them was placed a stove. But in Switzerland, Howard found something better than the best-ordered prisons—namely, the means to prevent them from being crowded; even the children of the poorest being provided with a moral and religious education.

Moreover, the prison-system in Switzerland was eminently a *curative* and *reformatory* one. A principal object here, writes Howard, is to make the criminal a better man. This, he adds, should always be the *leading* view in every house of correction; and the earnings of the prisoners should be only a *secondary* object. As rational and immortal beings, we owe this to them; nor can any criminality of theirs justify our neglect in this particular.

Howard visited the prison at Bâle. His account of it is interesting. The jail for felons was in one of the towers. It was empty of prisoners, but several rooms were ready, and each was provided with clean straw and blankets. To every



prisoner was allotted a room or cell, in which he was constantly shut up, except when conducted to the council-chamber for examination. One of the strongest cells, about six feet high, was situated near the great clock. It was entered from the flat roof by a ladder, which, after the prisoner had descended, was removed. His daily rations were thrust in at a side wicket. When Howard expressed his surprise at the singular strength of this gloomy *oubliette*, the jailer told him that, not the less, a prisoner had recently effected his escape from it. He was allowed a spoon with which to take his soup. This he had sharpened, to cut out a piece from the timber of his room. Then, by dint of practice, he acquired a knack of battering at the trap-door when the great clock, by striking, drowned the noise of his blows; and in fifteen days he forced all the bolts and fastenings. In attempting to lower himself from the lofty roof by a rope which he found, the rope gave way. He fell, and received such severe injuries that the surgeon at first pronounced his recovery impossible. However, his bones were set. He actually *did* recover; and he was pardoned.

*In Holland, the administration of the prisons*

was conducted upon enlightened principles. Convicts were not transported, but men were put to labour in the rasp-houses, and the women in the spin-houses; the regulating maxim being, "Make them diligent, and they will be honest." Great care was taken that moral and religious instruction should be given to each prisoner, and every effort was made to reform their manners, for their own and the public good. The chaplain not only performed public worship on Sunday, but during the week privately instructed the members of his unhappy flock, and carefully catechised them. Howard ascertained that the result, in numerous cases, fully proved the wisdom of the system, and was calculated to fill with joy the heart of every thoughtful and benevolent man.

Our reformer returned to England profoundly impressed by the superiority of the Continental nations in the administration of their prisons and the treatment of their criminals over his own. Summing up all he had seen and learned, he was constrained to say: "When I formerly made the tour of Europe, I seldom had occasion to envy foreigners anything I saw with respect to their situation, their religion, manners, or government. In my late journeys to view their prisons, I was

sometimes put to the blush for my native country. The reader will scarcely feel, from my narration, the same emotions of shame and regret as the comparisons excited in me on beholding the difference with my own eyes; but, from the account I have given him of foreign prisons, he may judge whether a desire of reforming our own be visionary—whether idleness, debauchery, disease, and famine be the necessary, unavoidable attendants of a prison, or only connected with it in our own ideas, for want of a more perfect knowledge and more enlarged views. I hope, too, he will do me the justice to think that neither an indiscriminate admiration of everything foreign, nor a fondness of censuring everything at home, has influenced me to adopt the language of a panegyrist in this part of my work, or that of a complainant in the rest.”

A few prisons still remained to be seen in England by our indefatigable enthusiast. And yet, in the course of three years, he had travelled no fewer than 13,418 miles, and had pursued his noble enterprise almost without intermission, in health and in sickness, unaided by any external influence, unsupported except by a consciousness of the purity of his motives. Having made some

brief journeys in various directions, and revisited the metropolitan prisons, he began to arrange for publication the vast mass of notes he had collected. In this laborious task he was assisted by a friend, the Rev. Mr. Densham; and the chaos having been reduced into tolerable order, the manuscripts were submitted to the revision of Dr. Price, a polemical writer, at one time of considerable repute. Next they were printed at Warrington, under the superintendence of Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Aikin, a surgeon and a *littérateur*—the brother of Mrs. Barbauld; and, at length, in April 1777, the great work on "The State of Prisons" was given to the world.

It was eagerly read, and produced an immense effect. It let in a flood of light upon a dark, obscure world of which the general public were wholly ignorant, and yet which reacted in a hundred different ways upon the social life of the country. Its revelations were full of pathos; its anecdotes were enthralling; its descriptions had all the advantage of novelty. Its pages, in fact, had the interest of romance, and, at the same time, the dignity of truth. Such books are not of frequent occurrence; and when they *do* appear, their publication, necessarily, becomes an event to be remembered and talked about.

Leaving the work for the present, we may now devote our attention to the personal habits and mode of life of its author, which will be found not unworthy of consideration.

The reader cannot fail to have been surprised that a man by nature so delicate, and even frail, should have been able to endure such a protracted labour; to have entered fever-infected dungeons, to have travelled over half a continent, to have borne day and night the burden of a constant mental pressure, and yet to have escaped unscathed, uninjured! It has been said of him that he seemed to bear a charmed life, and that whatsoever the danger into which he ventured, he came forth in safety. This was owing partly, we believe, to his faith in his work. It was a holy work, and he believed in it, and God was ever about his footsteps. For we shall find that Heaven blesses and sustains the man who does his duty, and who by prayer solicits the divine assistance. But it was owing also to his temperance and regular living. He ate no flesh; drank neither wine nor spirits; bathed in cold water daily; was moderate in his meals; eschewed late hours and night revels; rose early. Thus he strengthened a weak constitution, until he could fearlessly

penetrate into dungeons whither even the jailer and the physician feared to follow him.

From his youth upward, we are told, his diet had always been of the simplest ; and the older he grew, the more resolute he became in habits of abstemiousness. Some details of his way of living while he resided at Warrington, superintending the production of his great book, have been preserved. It was then mid-winter, but he rose at two o'clock precisely, washed, performed his devotions, then worked at his papers until seven, when he breakfasted, and dressed for the day.

At eight o'clock punctually, he repaired to the printing-office to inspect the progress of his sheets through the press. He remained until one, when the compositors went to dinner.

During their absence, he walked to his lodgings, and, putting some bread and dried fruit into his pocket, sallied forth to enjoy his customary walk ; eating, as he trudged along, his hermit fare, and drinking therewith a glass of cold water, begged at some cottager's door. This was his only dinner.

By the time the printers had returned to their work, Howard had generally, though not always, found his way back. Sometimes, however, he

would call upon a friend, and spend an hour or two in pleasant talk ; for he was by no means an ascetic—the social instincts glowed brightly in his nature.

He remained at the office until the men left off work for the day, when he withdrew to Dr. Aikin's family circle, and spent a quiet evening ; or retired to his lodgings, and after tea and prayers, betook himself to rest at an early hour.

We commend Howard's example to the imitation of our readers, if they would enjoy through life that greatest of all earthly blessings,—*mens sana in corpore sano*, a healthy mind in a healthy body. Not, indeed, that we ask them to follow strictly in his footsteps—to rise at two, or to refrain wholly from meat—conditions which in most cases would be impracticable and injurious ; but to abide by the two leading principles of his rule of life—temperance and cleanliness. If a man wishes to degrade himself to the level of the brutes, he has only to eat and drink to excess. If he would always have his mental powers at his command—his judgment clear, his imagination vigorous, his capacity for work uninjured—he must practise moderation ; moderation at the table and in bed, for an excess of sleep is as un-

wholesome as an excess of food. Let him, moreover, avoid intoxicating liquors. As the old Greek said, *Αριστον μὲν ὕδωρ* (Water is best)! These are not trivial matters; they are closely bound up with our happiness here and hereafter. For the drunkard shall not enter the kingdom of heaven; and upon earth his portion is misery, want, and shame.

In August 1777, Howard was called to London, suddenly, to attend the death-bed of his only sister, but arrived too late to take a loving farewell of one who had been very dear to him. He felt the blow keenly, but was too simply and truthfully pious to waver in his usual feelings of submission to the will of Heaven, and trustfulness that all was ordered for the best.







## CHAPTER V.

### IN PERILS BY SEA AND LAND.

**W**E have said that Howard's book had seized upon the attention of the public. Necessarily, it also attracted the notice of the legislature, and Parliament began to take up in a serious spirit the various questions involved in a reform of the prison-system of England. A Bill bearing directly upon the subject was prepared by Sir William Blackstone and Mr. Eden ; but more information being required as to the system in vogue upon the Continent, Howard once more resumed his philanthropic enterprise.

In April 1778 he crossed to Holland. But only a day or two after his arrival at Amsterdam, while he was walking in the street, a runaway horse threw him down, and injured him so severely that he was unable to travel for several days. As soon as possible he was removed to the Hague,

where his illness developed into fever, which endangered life, and laid him up for six weeks. His life-work was not finished, however, and God restored him to health. As soon as he was strong enough, he commenced his tour of inspection and inquiry, visiting the Hague, Rotterdam, Gonda, Haarlem, Utrecht, Deventer, Middleburgh, Breda ; finding much to admire and little to condemn.

Continuing instant in well-doing, from Holland he travelled into Germany. Here the aspect of affairs was unfavourable, and the condition of the prisons at Osnaburg and Brunswick seems to have been in no wise superior to that of the English prisons. At Berlin, on the contrary, they were well-ordered, healthy, clean, and under careful superintendence.

At Vienna most of the prisons secured his approval, but in the *Maison du Bourreau* he found cause for just and severe censure. Here, in one of the dungeons, he came upon a miserable object—a prisoner loaded with heavy irons, and chained to the wall ; anguish and misery had left their traces in clotted tears on his wan and wasted face. This scene seems to have suggested the description in Hayley's "Ode to Howard:"—

“ Where, in the dungeon's loathsome shade,  
The speechless captive clanks his chain,  
With heartless hope to raise that aid  
His feeble cries have called in vain :  
Thine eye his dumb complaint explores ;  
Thy voice his parting breath restores ;  
Thy cares his ghastly visage clear  
From death's chill dew, with many a clotted tear,  
And to his thankful soul returning life endear.”

While at Vienna, Howard was frequently honoured with invitations to dine at the royal table, with the ambassadors and nobles of the queen's court. A signal instance of his courage and love of truth occurred during his residence here. One day, while at dinner with Sir. R. Murray Keith, the English ambassador, the conversation turning upon the torture, a German gentleman of the party observed, that the glory of abolishing it in his own dominions belonged to his imperial majesty. “Pardon me,” said Howard; “his imperial majesty has only abolished one species of torture to establish in its place another more cruel : for the torture which he abolished lasted, at the most, a few hours ; but that which he has appointed lasts many weeks—nay, sometimes years. The poor wretches are plunged into a noisome dungeon, as bad as the Black Hole at Calcutta, from which they are taken out only if they confess what is laid to their charge.”

"Hush!" exclaimed the ambassador; "your words will be reported to his majesty."

"What!" replied Howard, indignantly; "shall my tongue be tied from speaking truth by any king or emperor in the world? I repeat what I asserted, and maintain its truth."

Deep silence followed, and every one present admired the intrepid boldness and courageous veracity of the philanthropist.

From Vienna Howard proceeded to Gratz, Laubach, and Trieste. At the last-named place he embarked in a small vessel for Venice, and for two days and nights was buffeted about the "stormy Adriatic" by contrary winds.

He entered Italy, as he himself tells us, with high expectations of considerable information, from a careful attention to the prisons and hospitals, in a country abounding with charitable institutions and public edifices. At Venice, the greatest prison is situated near the ducal palace, and it was one of the strongest Howard had ever seen. There were between three and four hundred prisoners, many of them confined in dark and loathsome cells for life, executions here being very rare. But Howard rejoiced to find that even dungeons such as these were free from jail-fever and epidemic

disease. None of the prisoners were loaded with chains. The allowance of bread to each weighed fourteen ounces.

By way of Padua, Ferrara, and Bologna, Howard repaired to Florence, of whose public institutions he furnishes the following account :—

“In Florence,” he says, “are two prisons. In the great prison, *Palazzo degl’ Otto*, were only twenty prisoners. Six of them were in the *secreto* chambers, which are twenty-one strong rooms. None of the prisoners were in irons. They had mattresses to lie on. Their bread was good. In the torture-chamber there was a machine for decollation, which prevents that repetition of the stroke which too often happens when the axe is used.

“In the other prison, *Delle Stinche*, there are five doors to pass before you come to the court. The opening of the first is three feet wide, and four feet nine inches high, with an inscription over it: *Oportet Misereri*.

“The hospital *S. Maria Nova* was crowded and too close: though the *men’s* fever-ward was 454 feet long. The women are attended by *nuns*, who have a passage under ground from the opposite convent. The hospital I most frequently visited was *S. Giovan di Dio*. In it there are

five rooms, with single beds for priests. The bedsteads of all were iron, and the boards of the hospital were varnished. The great attention of this order of friars to the sick in every country does them honour. In the *S. Paolo della Convalescenza*, recovering patients remain four days. In the almshouse, *S. Bonifazio*, the wards are all clean, and show the care of the nuns who attend on this charity."

From these quotations the reader will be enabled to form an idea of the nature of Howard's work, of the scenes of suffering he was compelled to witness ; and hence they will be led to do justice to his lofty sense of duty and exalted benevolence. He was a man of fortune, with cultivated tastes and artistic sympathies, who might have enjoyed at Cardington a life of elegant, if inglorious, ease, surrounding himself with sights and sounds of beauty. But he had a higher sense of the obligations which his position imposed upon him. He felt that it was his duty to do something towards leaving the world better and happier than he found it, and having undertaken a mission worthy even of an apostle, he did not fear to encounter suffering, and physical weariness, and perils by sea and land, in its zealous fulfilment.

After travelling upwards of 4600 miles, solely to mitigate the sorrows of a class whom society generally regards with indifference or contempt, Howard returned to England in December 1778. He hastened to Cardington to meet his son, and to enjoy a few days of tranquillity and repose among his friends. His affection for his son was very deep, and in his company he spent a happy Christmas. When young Howard returned to school, the philanthropist resumed his labour of mercy, commencing a reinspection of the prisons of England, to ascertain whether any and what improvements had been effected in their condition since his last visit. The result of these inquiries he designed to publish, along with the information obtained in his Continental tour, in an appendix to his "State of Prisons."

He first directed his steps to the jails in which were confined the prisoners captured during the recent war. Both at Bristol and Plymouth he was grieved to find that a lack of consideration was observable in their treatment. He then visited the new county jail and bridewell at Bristol, where the improvements he had suggested were all strictly and honestly carried out, with the happy result of a wonderful amendment, not

only in the health, but in the morals of their inmates.

In March 1779, he was at Aylesbury ; soon afterwards, at Oxford ; and his biographers trace him in his benevolent career from city to city and town to town, indefatigable, resolute, and undaunted. From Marlborough he hastened to Devizes ; from Devizes to Portsmouth ; from Portsmouth to Winchester. Returning home through Sussex, he was gratified at the reforms which had been introduced into the county jail at Petworth.

After a few days spent at Cardington, preparing his new book for the press, he set out on an eastward tour, and visited, in about a fortnight, Newport-Pagnell, Northampton, Coventry, Oakham, Leceister, Wymondham, Aylsham, Acle, Norwich, Ipswich, Woodbridge, Lavenham, Clare, Chelmsford, and Barking ; arriving in London on the 8th of April. How he contrived to accomplish so much in so short a time, and so thoroughly, excites our astonishment. It is a remarkable proof of the power of industry and method.

Our limited space, however, prevents us from entering into the details of all his perambulations, east and west, north and south. It will satisfy the reader, probably, to know that, in the course



of the year 1779, or rather, from the end of February to the end of November, he traversed almost every county in England, Ireland, and Scotland, travelling, to and fro, no fewer than 6990 miles.

His labours, meanwhile, had borne so much fruit, that an Act of Parliament had been obtained for building two penitentiary-houses in Middlesex, Surrey, Kent, or Essex, to try the great experiment of Home Correctional Discipline.

The Government, as might be supposed, named the prison-reformer first superintendent of the undertaking. He was averse to accepting it, but was overruled by his friend Sir William Blackstone. He soon felt himself trammelled, however, by the ties of office; and on the death of Sir William, which occurred early in 1780, he hastened to resign it. With his retirement, the project, which the ministry had never heartily taken up, was abandoned, and in its stead the Botany Bay Transportation Scheme was substituted; a scheme which inflicted a grievous evil on one of our finest colonies, and whose manifold deficiencies eventually led to its abandonment.

*In May 1781, Howard once more departed for*

the Continent. In one of the prisons of Rotterdam a number of Englishmen were at the time confined ; a few weeks previously they had undergone a public whipping for an ingenious attempt at escape. To provide themselves with implements, they had melted their pewter spoons, and by means of a mixture obtained from a chemist as a cure for the toothache, hardened the metal sufficiently to enable them to form it into keys. In all probability their device would have been successful, had not their intention been treacherously revealed by an English Jew who was in the secret, and who expected his own pardon as a recompense for his baseness. The dexterous but unfortunate prisoners were seized and carried to the whipping-post, where, in sight of their comrades in captivity, they received a severe flagellation ; while the traitor Jew was released, although he had been previously sentenced to imprisonment for life for a very grave offence.

From Rotterdam Howard went to Bremen. Thence he departed for Denmark and Sweden ; and after visiting their capitals, repaired to St. Petersburg. Here he had no sooner taken up his residence at a hotel than he received a message from the empress, inviting him to appear at court.

With his customary frankness, but with fitting courtesy, he declined the honour, informing the courtier who waited upon him that he had devoted himself to the work of visiting the dungeon of the captive and the residence of the wretched, not the palaces and courts of kings and czarinas. His object was to obtain access to the prisons of St. Petersburg, unfettered by official restrictions, that he might form an independent judgment whether the boasted clemency of the Russian Government was fact or fiction. It was proclaimed throughout Europe that capital punishment had been abolished in Russia. Howard, however, had reason to believe that it was retained in *effect* if not in *name*, and that the change really consisted in substituting a more barbarous method of execution.

Determined to ascertain the truth, if it were possible to do so, he adopted the bold expedient of driving directly to the abode of the executioner. The man was astonished and alarmed at the sudden apparition of a gentleman and a stranger, and Howard endeavoured to increase his confusion by assuming a certain haughtiness of tone, mien, and aspect. Acting as if he had authority to examine him, he told him that if he answered his questions

truly, he had no cause for apprehension. The man promised to speak the truth. "Can you inflict the punishment of the knout so as to occasion death in a short time?" "Yes, I can," was the reply.—"In how short a time?" "In a day or two."—"Have you ever so inflicted it?" "I have."—"What! lately?" "Yes; the last man punished with my hands by the knout died of the punishment."—"How do you render it thus fatal?" "By one or more strokes on the sides, which carry off large pieces of flesh."—"Do you receive orders to inflict the punishment in this manner?" "I do."

It may have been to this last instance of deadly punishment that Howard refers, as an eye-witness, under the date of August 10, 1781:—"I saw two criminals, a man and a woman, suffer the punishment of the knout. They were conducted from prison by about fifteen hussars and ten foot-soldiers. When they arrived at the place of punishment, the hussars formed themselves into a ring round the whipping-post, the drum beat a minute or two, and then some prayers were read, the populace taking off their hats. The woman was taken first; and after being roughly stripped to the waist, her hands and feet were bound with

cords to a post made for the purpose, a man standing before the post, and holding the cords to keep them tight. A servant attended the executioner, and both were stout men. The servant first marked his ground, and struck the woman five times on the back. Every stroke seemed to penetrate deep into the flesh. But his master, thinking him too gentle, pushed him aside, took his place, and gave all the remaining strokes himself, which were evidently more severe. The woman received twenty-five, and the man sixty. I pressed through the hussars, and counted the number as they were chalked on a board; both seemed but just alive, especially the man, who yet had strength enough to receive a small donation with some signs of gratitude. They were conducted back to prison in a little waggon. I saw the woman in a very weak condition some days after, but could not find the man any more."

The instrument from which the poor wretch received, too probably, his death-wound, is thus described among the apparatus of punishment and torture which the head of the St. Petersburg police showed to our philanthropic enthusiast. The knout whip is fastened to a wooden handle a *foot in length*, and consists of several thongs about

two feet long twisted together, to the end of which is fastened a single tough thong of a foot and a half, tapering towards a point, and capable of being changed by the executioner when too much softened by the blood of the criminal. Besides this terrible scourge, he was shown the axe and block; the machine formerly used for breaking the arms and legs; an instrument for splitting the nostrils of offenders; and other diabolical inventions, of which cruelty, in the name, the dishonoured name of justice, satisfied its thirst for blood.

It may well be believed, after a recital of these facts, that in the prisons of Russia Howard found no suggestions calculated to ameliorate the condition of those of his own country. On the contrary, they were dens of horror, where adults and children, men and women, the guilty and the unfortunate, were huddled together, in darkness and misery, without sufficient air, without sufficient food, loaded with heavy irons, and uncheered by a single gleam of hope!

During Howard's residence in St. Petersburg, however, a circumstance occurred which showed that Russia possessed at least *one* man capable of loving humanity, and of appreciating the efforts made by our philanthropist to mitigate the suffer-

ings of some of his fellow-creatures. A public society had awarded to a General Bulgartow a gold medal, in recognition of his generosity in enlarging certain benevolent institutions, and, more particularly, in supporting a seminary for the education and maintenance of young ladies overtaken by poverty. When the honour was offered to him, he replied that *his* services to mankind reached his own country only; but there *was* a man whose extraordinary benevolence embraced the whole world; who had already, with infinite toil and peril, extended his humanity to all nations, and who alone, therefore, was worthy of so splendid a distinction! Accordingly, he sent the medal to John Howard.

From St. Petersburg Howard made an excursion to Cronstadt, to visit the galleys; for it is to be observed that he never depended for his facts on the reports of others: he saw into everything, and inquired into everything, for himself. Returning to the capital, he was seized with a severe fit of ague; but his enthusiasm triumphed over physical infirmities, and having no time to lose, he started forthwith on an expedition to Moscow. Nearly all that we know of this expedition is embodied in *the following* letter, dated "Moscow, September 7,

1781." It runs thus :—" I am persuaded a line will not be unacceptable, even from such a vagrant as I am. I have unremittingly pursued the object of my journey ; but having looked into no palaces, nor seen any curiosities, my letters can afford little entertainment to my friends. I stayed above three weeks in St. Petersburg. I declined every honour that was offered me ; and when pressed to have a soldier to accompany me (to Moscow), I declined that also. Yet I fought my way pretty well ; five hundred miles over bad roads, in less than five days. I have a strong, yet light and easy carriage, which I bought for fifty roubles, or about ten guineas. This city is situated in a fine plain, totally different from all others. Each house has a garden, which extends the city eight or ten miles ; so that four and six horses are common in the streets. I content myself with a pair ; though I think I have driven to-day near twenty miles to see one prison and one hospital. I am told sad stories of what I am to suffer from the cold ; yet I will not leave this city till I have made repeated visits to the prisons and hospitals, as the first man in the kingdom assured me that my book would be translated into Russian. My next step is for Warsaw, about seven or eight hundred



miles ; but every step being homeward, I have spirit to encounter it, though through the worst country in Europe. I bless God I am well, with calm, easy spirits. I had a fit of the ague before I left St. Petersburg, but I travelled it off, the nights last week being warm. I thought I could live where any man did live ; but this northern journey, especially in Sweden, where there was no fruit, no garden stuff, and only sour bread and sour milk, I have been pinched. In this city, however, is every luxury, even pine-apples and potatoes." \*

Traversing Poland and Siberia with much rapidity, he re-entered Prussia. At Berlin he was rejoiced to notice that a very considerable improvement had been effected in the prisons, and that the house of correction was clean and healthful. The Orphan House was judiciously regulated, and the children were happy and contented, because their time was fully employed.

On his way from Berlin to Hanover, an incident occurred which shows the enthusiastic reformer's keen hatred of oppression under any guise.

\* This letter gives a vivid illustration of Howard's unassuming character. In ill health he had accomplished five hundred miles in five days, animated by no other motive than a desire to benefit humanity ; and yet he writes with complete unconsciousness that there was anything extraordinary in his conduct, anything deserving of praise or honour.

The reader must remember the autocratic character of Prussian administration, to appreciate the full significance of the anecdote.

He had come to a very narrow piece of road ; so narrow as to admit of the passage of only one vehicle at a time ; and hence it was enjoined on all postilions entering at either end to blow their horns by way of notice. Howard's postilion did so ; but, after travelling a good distance, they met one of the king's couriers, who had neglected the usual precaution. Armed, as he thought, with all the terror of the State, the courier ordered Mr. Howard to turn back ; but our philanthropist remonstrated, explaining that he had complied with the rule which the other had violated, and insisting that he was therefore at liberty to go forward. The courier, relying on an authority to which, in Prussia, every knee is accustomed to bend, indulged in violent menaces and loud ejaculations ; but all to no purpose. As neither was disposed to yield, they sat still a long time in their respective carriages ; but at length the courier gave up the point to the sturdy Englishman, who would on no account "renounce his rights."

In the prison-system of Hanover, Howard found

much to condemn. Obtaining an introduction to the Duke of York, who was also "Prince-bishop of Osnaburgh," he ventured to address the young prince in condemnation of the "torture" which was still inflicted in the episcopal city. The duke inquired how it was inflicted; but Howard refused to describe it, on the ground that the description would too keenly wound his feelings; but he implored the prince to direct his ministers to inquire into the matter, so that the horrid instrument might be abolished. The result of the conversation was, that the young duke pledged himself to prohibit its use when he came of age.

From Hanover, by way of Holland and the Austrian Netherlands, our philanthropist returned once more to England, completing one of the longest and most interesting tours in which he had yet been engaged. Arriving in London about the middle of December, his first care was to accompany his son to Cardington, that they might enjoy their Christmas holidays together. At this time he devoted much of his attention to the future course of young Howard's education. At first he resolved to send him to Eton, and had made every necessary preparation for his removal; *but learning* that at that institution no efficient

moral or religious supervision could then be expected, he changed his plans, and finally placed him under the charge of the Rev. Mr. Walker of Nottingham.

This duty discharged, he commenced, in January 1782, a new series of prison visits throughout the British Isles, an arduous labour in which he was engaged, with scarcely a day's intermission, for the entire twelvemonth ; concluding it with an inspection of the Fleet prison, in London, on the 30th of December.

Our limited space precludes us from dwelling upon the details of the year's work. Nor, indeed, by doing so, should we serve any useful purpose, for necessarily they would exhibit no novelty. But it is desirable that we should record the honour conferred upon Howard during his tour in Ireland, the degree of Doctor of Civil Law having been accorded to him by the University of Dublin.

In this year of toil Howard travelled upwards of eight thousand miles.

Having resolved to visit Spain and Portugal, the only countries of Europe of whose penal and charitable institutions he was ignorant, Howard sailed from Falmouth on the 31st January 1783,

and, after a favourable voyage, landed at Lisbon. Here he was glad to learn that imprisonment for debt had been abolished. A charitable society existed for promoting the release of prisoners who might be otherwise detained for fees. This opportunity for the exercise of his own active benevolence was not to be neglected. In the prison of the *Limoiero* lay 774 criminals, who were humanely treated. It contained also a manufactory, or reformatory school, in which about 1000 vagrant and deserted children were employed. In the numerous secret chambers in this prison, and at the Castle, several prisoners were rigorously confined. The ecclesiastical prison contained six priests and three women, committed "pro salute animarum,"—for the safety of their souls! Howard failed to obtain admission to the prison of the Inquisition, reserved for religious offenders and heretics; but he learned that it contained nineteen vaulted cells, separated by walls six feet thick, and that some of these were totally dark.

Totally dark! Will the reader endeavour to realize to himself the meaning of these words—the unhappy condition of a poor creature, imprisoned for conscience' sake, in a narrow dun-

geon, from which the light of day was wholly excluded !

Quitting Lisbon early in March, Howard visited the prison at Evora and Elvas, and then, crossing the Spanish frontier, repaired to Badajoz. Most of the jails in this celebrated city were spacious and well-conducted. Then he went to Toledo, and from Toledo to Madrid, Valladolid, Bruges, Pampeluna. On his way home he visited Lisle, Bordeaux, and Paris ; Utrecht, Antwerp, Ghent, and Ostend—arriving in England about the 23rd of June.

In the middle of August, accompanied by his son, Howard went to Ireland. After a short interval, he reappeared in London ; and later in the year retired to Warrington, to prepare another edition of his great work.

A calculation found in a memorandum-book of this date, shows that in his philanthropic enterprises he had travelled no fewer than 42,033 miles. Lest the record should be regarded by any stranger as indicative of self-esteem, Howard added :—

"To God alone be the praise ! I do not regret the loss of many conveniences of life, but bless God, who inclined my mind to such a scheme."

Here we may fitly introduce the glowing eulogium pronounced by Edmund Burke on the labours of our illustrious prison-reformer.

"I cannot name this gentleman," he says, "without remarking that he has done much to open the eyes and hearts of mankind. He has visited all Europe ; not to survey the sumptuousness of palaces or the stateliness of temples ; not to make accurate measurements of the remains of ancient grandeur, nor to form a scale of the curiosities of modern art ; not to collect medals or to collate manuscripts ;—but to dive into the depths of dungeons ; to plunge into the infection of hospitals ; to survey the mansions of sorrow and pain, and to take the gauge and dimensions of misery, depression, and contempt ; to remember the forgotten, to attend to the neglected, to visit the forsaken, and compare and collate the distresses of all men in all countries. His plan is original, and it is as full of genius as it is of humanity. It was a voyage of discovery, a circumnavigation of charity. Already the benefit of his labour is felt more or less in every country. I hope he will anticipate his final reward, by seeing all its effects fully realized in his own. He will receive, not by retail, but in gross the

reward of those who visit the prisoner ; and he has so forestalled and monopolized this branch of charity, that there will be, I trust, little room to merit by such acts of benevolence hereafter."

A strange but authentic anecdote is told in illustration of Howard's remarkable moral courage, and the influence he possessed over the minds of men of the lowest class. During an alarming riot at the Savoy prison, the prisoners had killed two of the warders or keepers ; and their fury was so excessive that no person dared to approach them, until Howard chivalrously insisted on entering their midst. In vain his friends, in vain the jailers, sought to dissuade him ; he calmly presented himself, unattended, among two hundred ruffians ; and such was the power of his *name*, such the personal effect of his tranquil and benignant manner, that they soon desisted from their clamour, listened to his gentle admonitions, represented their grievances, and at last suffered themselves to be reconducted in quiet to their cells. These men knew how he had toiled to improve their wretched condition, and could appreciate, if they could not imitate, the nobility of his example.





## CHAPTER VI.

### "AGAINST PLAGUE AND PESTILENCE."

**W**E must pass over the next two years of Howard's life—from 1783 to 1785—with a brief allusion. He spent them partly at Cardington, partly in London. They were not altogether happy years, for his prolonged philanthropic exertions had involved him in pecuniary difficulties, and he was sorely troubled by the misconduct of his son, whose profligate habits had brought about a mental disorder. His father was compelled to remove him from the University of Edinburgh, where he had placed him in 1783, and retire with him to Cardington. Here, separated from his evil companions, and treated with wise and considerate affection, he partially recovered. In the hope he might yet be trained into a useful member of society, he *was then* entrusted to the care of the Rev. R.

Robinson of Cambridge, and entered at that university as a fellow-commoner of St. John's College. This difficulty settled, and his affairs being to some extent adjusted, through the generous kindness of his friend Whitbread, Howard felt himself at liberty to resume that career of active benevolence to which the best years of his life had been consecrated; and he resolved, as his final contribution to the welfare of humanity, to investigate the condition of the plague hospitals of Europe. The task was one of infinite personal danger, for the plague selects its victims indiscriminately—from young and old, rich and poor; all ages, all classes, all constitutions, furnish its victims—and no man could enter a lazaretto, or plague hospital, in Howard's days, with any certainty of escaping the deadly contagion. For the terrible character of the disease was augmented by an entire neglect of those sanitary precautions to which we now-a-days attach, and justly, so high a value.

Howard, however, was not of the stuff which quails before considerations of personal peril. He never counted the cost; enough for him to know that there was a work to be done, and that it was a good work. He shrank not from self-sacrifice.

Howard, as we have seen, had mastered the principles of medical science, and, with the assistance of his friends, Dr. Aikin and Dr. Jebb, he drew up a list of queries to be addressed to the physicians or medical officers in charge of the lazarettos he proposed to visit.

He left England in November 1785. It was his desire to commence his inquiries at Marseilles, as one of the principal Mediterranean ports; but aware of the jealousy with which the French watched over their Levantine trade, he foresaw that he should find some difficulty in gaining admission to the Marseilles lazaretto. He waited, therefore, at the Hague, and secured the good offices of Lord Caermarthen, then Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. From the Hague, after a few days, he went to Utrecht, where he received a despatch, informing him that not only had his request been refused, but a warning given that if he entered France, on any pretence whatever, he would be cast into the Bastile. In these circumstances, his friends urged him not to proceed. But he had resolved upon his course, and feeling that any report upon lazarettos would be incomplete which omitted that of Marseilles, he determined, at whatever risk, to make the attempt.

By way of Dort, Antwerp, and Brussels, the intrepid philanthropist proceeded to Paris. To escape recognition, he withdrew to a small and obscure inn, having secured a place in the Lyons diligence, which started on the following morning. At an early hour he retired to bed, but about midnight was aroused by a violent knocking at his room door. On the door being opened, his servant entered, followed by a man in black clothes, with a sword at his side, who imperatively demanded if his name was Howard. "Yes," he replied; "and what of that?" "Did you come to Paris in the Brussels diligence, accompanied by a man in a black wig?" To which Howard answered, that he paid no attention to such trifles as the colour of men's perukes! The mysterious visitor then departed. Howard was not again disturbed; and the next morning he started for Lyons. He travelled in the character of an English physician, and was fortunate enough to do credit to his part by prescribing, with success, for a lady who fell ill on the journey.

On his arrival at Lyons he was advised not to expose himself, and he accordingly confined his visits to two or three Protestant clergymen.

He was unable, however, to depart without an inspection of the prisons and hospitals of the city.

In reaching Marseilles he repaired to his friend the Rev. Mr. Trenchard, who immediately on seeing him exclaimed: "Mr. Howard, I have always been desirous to see you until now. Leave France as quickly as you can; I know there are something for you in all directions." Then he related that an accident only had prevented his arrest in Paris. It had recently happened that numerous arrests had been made on what proved to be very frivolous pretences, and much odium had thereby been thrown upon the police and government. The prefect, therefore, having occasion to leave Paris for the day, had given orders that no more arrests should be made until his return. This did not take place until the evening following Howard's arrival, and in the interval he had escaped into the south.

Howard did not follow his friend's advice. Having got into Marseilles, in spite of the French Government, he was determined to see its lazaretto. His resolution conquered every obstacle. He not only gained admission to the lazaretto,

but secured all the information he required, and a minute, practical account of its working in every department.

While tarrying at Marseilles, he heard of an interesting prisoner in the galleys at Toulon, and resolved to visit him. He accordingly dressed himself up as a French *exquisite*, of the highest *ton*; and thus disguised, reached Toulon, and obtained leave to inspect the convict-hulks. The following is his account of his interview with the prisoner:—

“There is but one slave here who now professes himself a Protestant, and his name is François Condè. He has been confined in the galleys two and forty years, for being concerned with some boys in a quarrel with a gentleman (who lost his gold-headed cane) in a private house in Paris. The boys were apprehended; and this Condè, though only fourteen years of age, and lame of one arm, was condemned to the galleys for *life*. After four or five years he procured a Bible, and learned by himself to read; and becoming, through close application to the Scriptures, convinced that his religion was *Anti-Christian*, he publicly renounced it, and declared and defended his sentiments. Ever since, he has

continued a steady Protestant, humble and modest, with a character irreproachable and exemplary, respected and esteemed by his officers and fellow-prisoners. I brought away with me some musical pipes of his turning and tuning. He was in the galley appropriated to the aged and infirm; and these, besides the usual allowance of bread, have an additional allowance from the king of nine sous per day."

In a small coasting-vessel Howard made his escape to Nice, and thence he proceeded to Genoa and Leghorn, at both places visiting the lazarettos, which were considered the best in Europe. At Leghorn, the Grand Duke of Tuscany invited him to dinner; an honour which the humble and unassuming Howard respectfully declined.

The hospital at Pisa, which was his next resting-place, he pronounced an excellent institution. He was delighted with the elegant appearance of the women's ward, which was furnished with light iron-grated doors to admit the air and sunshine freely. They commanded a view of a beautiful botanic garden, so that the inmates were not without a source of mental gratification.

From Pisa, Howard made his way to Florence, and from Florence to Rome, where, however, he devoted little time to an examination of its splendid memorials of antiquity and masterpieces of art, but kept ever before him his one object,—the relief of the oppressed and suffering. In the noble hospital of San Michele he passed two whole mornings, but found it sadly neglected by its official superintendents. The favourite institution of the then Pope was a seminary, or school, for young women, where the exquisite neatness, economy, and industry never failed to excite the visitor's admiration. Howard had an audience of the Pope, who dispensed with the ceremony usually exacted from those admitted to his presence ; and on taking leave of the philanthropist, clasped his hand, and said : “ I know you Englishmen do not value these things ; but the blessing of an old man can do you no harm.”

At Naples the unwearied traveller embarked for Malta, where he arrived on the 30th of March, after a wild and dangerous voyage. The vessel was so buffeted and tossed about by a tremendous storm for hours, that the captain and crew were afraid she would founder. Malta was then in the possession of the Knights of St.



John, or Knights Hospitallers of Jerusalem ; a chivalric order which, in the olden times, had done Europe good service by their exploits against the Turks, but had grievously fallen from their high estate. The Grand Master afforded Howard every facility for visiting the prisons and hospitals, but the results of his inspection were not satisfactory. The former were exceedingly small, squalid, and ill-regulated, and the punishment of the torture was still in vogue. The latter exhibited the same proofs of neglect and indifference. "I observed," says Howard, "that the physician in going his rounds was obliged to keep his handkerchief to his face ; the wards were all so dirty, as to make it needful to perfume them : the use of perfume I always reckon a proof of inattention to cleanliness and air, and this inattention struck me here very forcibly. The number of patients admitted into these hospitals during the three weeks I was at Malta, was above five hundred ; they were attended to by the most ragged, dirty, unfeeling, and inhuman individuals I ever saw. On one of my visits I found them amusing themselves with the incoherent exclamations of a delirious and *dying* patient. The horses and mules of the

Grand Master, kept in an adjoining building, were taken much greater care of, and were attended to by a greater number of individuals, all of whom looked decent and clean. I cannot help adding, that in the centre of each range of stables a fountain was constantly running into a stone basin; but in the hospital, though there was a place for a fountain, there was no water."

Leaving the confines of Europe, Howard now set sail for Smyrna, on the coast of Asia Minor, where he arrived on the 16th of May. After the usual course of inspection, he was back again to Europe; and at Constantinople his chivalrous philanthropy carried him into the plague-infected hospitals, which even the physicians refused to approach. Rumours of his medical skill reached the ears of an officer high in authority in the Sultan's court, whose daughter was afflicted with an illness which had baffled all the remedies known to the Turkish pharmacopœia. Howard prescribed for her. She recovered, and the grateful father pressed upon the wonderful English doctor a purse of 2000 sequins, or about £900. Howard, however, would accept of no other fee than a dish of grapes from the officer's garden. It is needless to say that during his sojourn in

the city of the Bosphorus he was abundantly supplied with these.

A painful illustration of the summary and sanguinary character of Turkish justice is recorded by Howard. The chamberlain who had supplied the city with bread, was summoned before the Grand Vizier. On his arrival in great pomp at the palace, he was asked why the bread was of so indifferent a quality. "The last harvest was not a good one," he replied. Apparently satisfied on this point, the Vizier next inquired, "Why is the weight short?" "That," said the chamberlain, "may occasionally happen with two or three loaves out of so large a number;" adding, that greater care should be taken in the future. He was ordered from the presence; an executioner was commanded to strike off his head in the street forthwith, and his body was exposed to the public view for three days, with three light loaves beside it, to denote the crime for which the poor wretch had suffered so disproportionate a penalty!

We are compelled to pass over the details of the remainder of Howard's continental tour. The latter part of it was overclouded by the sad *intelligence* which reached him of the renewed

misconduct of his son. Young Howard had again fallen into evil ways, and broken loose from all control. "On the receipt of your letter," wrote the unhappy father to Mr. Whitbread, his loyal and generous friend, "I could hardly lift up my head. With David I say, 'O my son Absalom, my son, my son!' and am ever ready to add, Would to God the raging waves had swallowed me up! But—I check myself—'Shall I receive good from the hand of God, and shall I not receive evil?' Will travelling amuse him? I consent to do anything. I once thought he was of a soft, complying temper; I afterwards saw what grieved me. I have often cautioned him not to fling away, by his folly and indiscretion, the probable advantages he enjoyed, but to bend his mind to some particular study; but, alas! alas! I shall hasten home."

Howard was also distressed at this time by a proposal which had been made for the erection of a statue in his honour. His humility, and deep sense of his unworthiness, shrank from all public recognition of his benevolent labours. Probably no man was ever more indifferent to reputation or public fame. Applause seems to have been positively unwelcome to him. He feared lest

the motives which had inspired his unprecedented exertions in the great cause of humanity should be misunderstood, and he would appear to have distrusted himself; to have been afraid lest, all unwittingly, some mean or selfish feeling should be mixed up with his large-souled sympathy for the victims of oppression and cruelty.

We must not wholly omit the romantic experiences which diversified this great and good man's otherwise monotonous career of philanthropic work. Towards the end of 1781 we find him at Venice, where he visited the hospitals, galleys, and prisons, and obtained an insight into the terrible tyranny of the Venetian Government. We have said "terrible tyranny," and that our expression is not exaggerated, the following anecdote, related by Howard, will show :—

A German merchant happening to be at Venice on business, supped every night at a small inn, in company with a few other persons. An officer of the State Inquisition came to him one evening, and ordered him to follow whither he led, and to deliver to him his trunk, after having put his seal upon it. The merchant asked why he must do this; but received no answer to his inquiry, *except by the officer putting his hand to his*

lips as a signal for silence. He then muffled his head in a cloak, and guided him through different streets to a low gate, which he was ordered to enter, and, stooping down, he was led through various underground passages to a small, dark chamber, where he remained all night. The next day he was conducted into a larger room, draped with black, with a single wax-light and a crucifix on its mantelpiece. Having continued there in perfect solitude for a couple of days, he suddenly saw a curtain drawn, and heard a voice questioning him concerning his name, his business, the company he kept, and particularly whether, on a certain day, he had not been in the society of certain persons, and heard an abbé, or French priest, whose name was mentioned, make use of certain expressions, which were accurately repeated. At last he was asked if he should know the abbé if he saw him; and on his answering that he should, a long curtain was drawn aside, and behold, the unfortunate man's dead body suspended to a gibbet!

After a visit to Vienna, where he spent his Christmas, and where he was honoured by a

private interview, of two hours' duration, with the emperor, Howard returned to England by way of Frankfort, Aix-la-Chapelle, Utrecht, and Amsterdam. He arrived in London about the 7th of February 1787.





## CHAPTER VII.

### HIS LAST YEARS.

**H**OWARD, on his return, paid a visit to Cardington, where his unhappy son was confined as a maniac, under the charge of an experienced keeper. It was a melancholy visit. Finding that he could not afford the slightest relief, but that, on the contrary, his presence seemed to increase his son's disorder, he hastened back to London. The remainder of the year 1787 he spent in a reinspection of the prisons of England and Ireland, meeting everywhere with the most gratifying proofs of the beneficial results of his unwearied labours. At Manchester,—to give but one example,—a new prison, with single cells and separate apartments, introducing every improvement which Howard had suggested, was in course of erection, and the foundation-stone, then but recently deposited, bore



an inscription which Howard's modesty ignored, but which his biographer has preserved; namely:—

“That there may remain to posterity a monument of the affection and gratitude of this country to that most excellent person who hath so fully proved the wisdom and humanity of the separate and solitary confinement of offenders, this prison is inscribed with the name of JOHN HOWARD.”

The year 1788 was similarly occupied. The industrious philanthropist visited most of the principal jails and prisons in Great Britain and Ireland, finding much to assure him that his work had not been in vain, though not a little to show that much remained to be done by those who should come after him. In February 1789 he published his book on the lazarettos of Europe; it was received by the public with the deepest interest, and added another to his many claims on the gratitude of his fellows.

Meantime his son had been removed to Leicester, where he afterwards died. His removal enabled the afflicted father to pay another visit to Cardington. He was now advanced in years, and it was with a profound melancholy that the old man retrod the scenes of so much happiness and so *much* sorrow. The last terrible affliction had

opened all his former wounds afresh ; and, says Dixon, in the closing scenes of his laborious life he saw the clouds ingathering darkly from every quarter of the horizon.....This was his farewell visit to his favourite home.

He had already arranged the plan of another Continental tour, and he went among his friends and tenants with the consciousness it was the last time he and they would ever meet on earth. In this his heart was only too prophetic ! Death was already busy in his frame. “ The last shaft from the Chastener’s hand had fallen on his hearth in such a shape, through wilful sin and folly, that the stricken father—who had already borne his ample share of suffering, till fondly nursing the delusive hope that after a time of trial and of righteous expiation, the veil which had descended on his house might be withdrawn, and his child’s clear intellect again resume its vacant throne—felt at length his hold on life and its affections failing ; yet still did he hope on—still did he dream of the penitent’s recovery and restoration. But, as we have seen, the dream was not to be fulfilled, and Howard stood alone in the world. Yet not utterly alone ; for his friends were many, and his admirers included all who were sensible

to the impulse of humanity and capable of admiring a life devoted to the purest charity.

The route Howard now proposed to himself lay through Holland, Germany, Russia, Poland, Hungary, Turkey, Anatolia, Egypt, and the States of Barbary ; a route which, he calculated, it would take between two and three years to accomplish. " I am not insensible," he wrote, " to the dangers that must attend such a journey. Trusting, however, in the protection of that kind Providence which has hitherto preserved me, I calmly and cheerfully commit myself to the disposal of unerring Wisdom. Should it please God to cut off my life in the prosecution of this design, let not my conduct be uncandidly imputed to rashness or enthusiasm, but to a serious, deliberate conviction that I am pursuing the path of *Duty*; and to a sincere desire of being made an instrument of more extensive usefulness to my fellow-creatures than could be expected in the narrower circle of a retired life."

It is evident that Howard felt his race was almost run ; that he had nearly finished the work he had undertaken ; that the shadow of the grave was upon him as he departed on his last mission of love and mercy. The last scene was at hand,

and the actor in a noble and varied drama prepared to retire from the stage with as much dignity as he had always borne upon it. It has been pointed out that the wonder is he had endured so well and so long the heavy strain of an enterprise in which he may be said to have stood alone. Often prostrated by the most violent shocks; accidents, fevers, contagions; want of rest, shelter, and sufficient food; hunger and cold; confinement in the plague-polluted atmosphere of the lazarettos; perils by land and sea; the emotions excited by a succession of scenes of misery and suffering; in a word, all the toils and experiences of a life of almost unparalleled activity, had sapped the foundations of a constitution never remarkable for its strength or vitality. And when to these destroying elements are added, says Hepworth Dixon, the wearing excitement of heart and mind which he had had to endure,—the loss of his dear wife, and the sad consciousness that her son, the heir of so many hopes, had fallen a victim to the most degrading vices,—it is marvellous that the old man's frame should have maintained its vigour and his mind its tone so long.

Early in July 1789 Howard embarked. He

entered Germany by way of Osnaburg, where he found that the torture, far from being abolished, had been enhanced by new refinements of cruelty. Thence he proceeded to Hanover, and by way of Brunswick to Berlin, Spandau, and Königsberg. As, however, his principal object was to collect information respecting the conditions under which the plague was bred and propagated, with a view to the discovery of some means of arresting its fatal progress, he spent but a short time in these cities. On the 17th of August we find him at Memel, whence he travelled to the fortress-town of Mittau in Courland, and crossing the frontier of Russia, entered Riga. There he found the military hospital in so squalid a condition that between four and five hundred recruits had perished in a single twelvemonth!

At Riga he made the following entry in his diary. As it illustrates the simplicity and genuineness of his religious faith, it merits quotation :—

“ RIGA, August 23rd.—I hope I have sources of enjoyment that depend not on the particular spot I inhabit: a rightly cultivated mind, under the power of religion, and the exertion of beneficent dispositions, are a ground of satisfaction little affected by *heres* and *theres*.

“ *I hope my soul thirsts for the ordinances of God’s house,*

which I am this day deprived of, but I will make it a day of rest. Through mercy brought here in safety, I have this morning read over some solemn transactions of my soul many years past, and in the most solemn and devout manner renew those vows which, alas! have been too often broken, and acknowledge thee, the Almighty Jehovah, for my Lord and my God. O God, hear my prayer, and let my cry come before thee!"

From Riga, Howard repaired to St. Petersburg, where he met with a warm and hospitable reception. It was his intention to strike across Russia to Constantinople, whence he might explore the ports of the Black Sea and the shores of the Mediterranean. This was not his original design, and he explains the circumstances which led to his change of plans in a letter from Moscow to his zealous friend, Mr. Whitbread, M.P.

*"Moscow, October 2, 1789.*

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—I did myself the pleasure of writing soon after my arrival in this city, and informed you of my intended route through Warsaw and Hungary; but I am since informed of the probability of meeting some neutral ship and going down the Black Sea to Constantinople. But what has further determined me to take the chance of that route is, the sickly state of the Russian army on the confines of Turkey, where I hope to do some good. I shall first, with them, fairly try the powders of Dr. James.\* My letters at Warsaw I have written to be forwarded to me at Cherson.

"I find by my thermometer the cold is coming on, as

\* Then much esteemed as a specific against fever, and even now held in good repute.

every morning it is three or four degrees lower. I shall get away in a few days, and I hope not to be caught by the heavy snows. I am pure well, and my business goes smoothly on. I do not want anything, nor can I for a long time (unless I fall into the hands of the wild Tartars), as my friend has so abundantly and generously supplied me."

From Moscow, Howard proceeded through a wild and dreary country to Crementschusk, on the banks of the Dnieper, where four hundred recruits, suffering from scurvy, were huddled together in a small hovel-like barrack, and supplied, for their only sustenance, with a kind of water-gruel, sour bread, and still sourer *quass*. We need not be surprised that, under such a regimen, scores of the poor creatures were carried off by putrid fever.

Thence he repaired to Cherson, where he found a similar establishment in a still worse condition; the only attendants being men discharged from various regiments on account of their stupidity or drunkenness. The primary objects in all hospitals,—namely, cleanliness, diet, air, separation of patients, and careful nursing,—were here altogether neglected. Yet, as Howard says, they are so essential that humanity, no less than good policy, demands that no expense should be spared *to secure them*.

It is worth while, we think, to quote a statement that appeared in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for January 1790, because it affords us a contemporary testimony to Howard's noble qualities, and proves that they were fully appreciated even in his own day :—

"Mr. Howard, we are happy to hear from a friend of his who has received a letter from him, was in good health and spirits on the 17th of November at Cherson, in Little Tartary, to the north of the Black Sea, on his way to Turkey, visiting the army and navy hospitals in that part of the Russian dominion, after having visited those of Riga, Cronstadt, and other towns, which he found throughout in such bad order as would have given credibility, had he wanted it, to the information he had received from good authority, that no less than the shocking number of seventy thousand recruits, sailors and soldiers, had died in that country in the course of the preceding year; owing, undoubtedly, in a great measure to inattention, ignorance, and inhumanity, whose influence is always checked at least, if it cannot be overcome, by his persevering benevolence, his fortitude, and his skill, wherever human misery attracts this friend to every clime, this *patriot of the world*: his desire of doing good in a far-distant clime may even now be friendly to several of his fellow-creatures (if men may be called so) in this country when they read the following words of the above-mentioned letter from Cherson:—'Many are here shivering with the ague (a morass of twenty miles is before my window). I give the ounce of bark and drachm of snake-root and worm-wood, which has not failed me once.'"

We shall conclude our quotations by transcrib-



ing the last letter which Howard is known to have written. It is dated November 14, 1789. Six weeks later, and his labours were at an end, but nothing in the letter, shows that he had any presentiment of so speedy a death :—

“DEAR SIR,—I wrote to you on my arrival at Moscow on the first, and—permit me to say—constant impression of your kindness. I also wrote to you about a fortnight after, informing you of my intention to visit the army and navy hospitals towards the Black Sea. I was somewhat sensible of the dangers I had to encounter, and the hardships I had to endure, in a journey of thirteen or fourteen hundred miles, with only my servant. I went on pretty well till on the borders of Tartary, when, as I depended on my patent chain, my great trunk and hat-box were cut off from behind my chaise. It was midnight, and both of us having travelled four nights, were fast asleep. However, we soon discovered it; and having soon recovered the shock, I went back directly to the suspected house, and ran in among ten or twelve of the banditti. At break of day I had some secured, and search made. My hat-box was found, but my great trunk I almost despaired of, though I stayed before the door in my chaise two days. Providentially, the fourth day it was found by a peasant. The brass nails glistened in a part where the oil-skin was worn. His oxen would not go on; he beat them, but they would not go on: he then saw something, but durst not approach till another peasant came up, when, after signing themselves with the cross, they went up to it, and carried it directly to the magistrate of the village. He sent after me to a town about eighty miles off, where I was to stay two or three days, and I returned. I found by my inventory that not a single handkerchief was *lost*, and they missed about a hundred guineas in paper in

the middle of the trunk. My return stunned them: all would have been removed before light. I have broken up the band: four will go into the..... I am well; my clothes and bedding, I think, are warmer since I got them out of the fire. I saw some other travellers who were robbed, and had lost their money and goods on the road.

"Thomas showed me his marketing. A quarter of lamb, that he said would cost five shillings [in England], he paid sevenpence halfpenny for. My marketing is a good melon for five farthings, which supplies [the place of] my English luxury of currants with my bread and tea. I have visited the hospitals here, in which there are about eight hundred sick recruits. I have this week been only about forty miles, for between a deserted town and Otshakov lies the army hospital. There I stayed two or three days, as I found about two thousand sick and wounded. They are dreadfully neglected. A heart of stone would almost bleed! I am a spy, a sad spy on them, and they all fear me. The abuses of office are glaring, and I want not courage to tell them so.

"I have just received your kind letter from Warsaw. I read it over and over again. I exult in the happiness and prosperity of your house, and that my young friend likes Cardington.

"I shall be moving for the navy hospital, at Sevastopol, in the south of the Crimea, about the end of the year; and I hope by some means to be at Constantinople the beginning of March.

"The wild Cossacks who live underground in the Crimea must look sharp if they rob me, as I will not go to sleep any night on the road, and I am well armed. I am persuaded no hurry or fear will be on my mind. My journey, I still think, will engage me for three years, and as I have a year's work in England, I think little of Cardington.

"The land for several hundred miles is the finest garden mould; not a stone mixed with it, nor a single tree, nor any inhabitants. A person may have any quantity for ten

years, and, after that, by paying the empress fifteen rubles (about one guinea and three quarters) a year. A person showed me some fine hay-stacks: two-thirds he took and one-third he gave the empress, but no rent. He said he had bought fine meat for less than a halfpenny a pound before the army came into this country.

"I shall, I understand, take possession of some poor Turk's deserted house in the Crimea [for] two months, as I am well informed there was double the number of inhabitants in the capital than there are now in all that fine country. The cruelty of the Russians forced 100,000 to quit their country. Great things are expected on the great St. Nicholas's day, next month. He is the patron saint of this country, who assisted them in destroying four or five thousand men, women, and children, at Otshakov last year on his day. But as our trades are different, I wish to have no further acquaintance with that saint.

"Though ever wishing to be with my affectionate friend.

"SAMUEL WHITBREAD, ESQ., M.P."

"J. HOWARD.

The time was now approaching when Howard was to die a hero's death; not in the battle-field, it is true, but in the cause of humanity, and from the blow of an enemy whose desolating efforts he was endeavouring to avert from his fellow-creatures. He died in his bed, and he died of disease: a natural death men call it; yet he died for the sake of others, as surely as if he had fallen in some great fight, fought and won on behalf of the liberty of nations. In death, as *in life*, he served his fellow-man. Ah, reader,

will you go and do likewise? We do not ask you to enter the infectious air of hospitals, or to penetrate into the dark dungeons of prisons, or to brave the dangers of plague-smitten lazarettos, or to cross land and sea in your crusade of noble and chivalrous endeavour. Such tasks as those are reserved for GOD's chosen servants, who seem to appear on our earth at intervals to afford us a bright example, and to read us a lesson of duty. But in your own sphere, in your own neighbourhood, there are sad hearts which need the oil of sympathy; there are tears shed which you may dry; there are desolate hearths which you may cheer; and doing this, you will be doing, according to the measure of your gifts, as Howard did, and will earn the blessing which Howard earned. Your work may be done in secret, and your name will not be handed down by one grateful generation to another; but the applause of your friends, and the thanks of those whom you relieve, and the approval of your conscience, will be an exceeding great reward. And haply others, encouraged and taught by your example, may address themselves to a similar labour, so that, link by link, the golden chain will be extended, until it reaches from earth to heaven!

While Howard was still a resident at Cherson, the fortress of Burder was captured from the Turks, but as the winter was far advanced, this victory closed the campaign of 1789. The officers then received permission to visit Cherson. Weeks of festivity followed ; of balls, and banquets, and masquerades. But the course of revelry was soon interrupted. The victors had brought with them an unseen foe infinitely more formidable than any they had encountered in the field. A deadly fever suddenly made its appearance in the crowded town, and proved as fatal as cholera or the plague. The inhabitants died by scores. A young lady, living about sixteen miles from Cherson, caught the infection, and her friends, acquainted with Howard's reputation as a physician, earnestly entreated him to attend her. He objected that he administered only to the poor, and not to those who could afford to pay for regular advice ; but, being again importuned, he visited the sufferer. On one occasion the weather was singularly severe, the cold intense, and the rain fell in torrents. No vehicle could be procured, and mounting an old dray-horse, Howard rode the whole sixteen miles. He found his patient *dying*, and disregarding his wet condition, devoted

himself to persevering though unavailing efforts for her relief. When all was over, he returned to Cherson, but he felt that the seeds of death had been sown in his frame ; that he had caught the fever. He kept his room for a day or two, when, seeming to have recovered himself, he accepted an invitation to dine with Admiral Mordvinoff. Here he stayed somewhat later than he was accustomed, and when he returned home he found himself again unwell, but thought he was troubled by symptoms of the gout. On Saturday night, however, the disorder proved to be the fatal fever, for which he took his favourite remedy, James's powder. It proved of no avail, and he rapidly grew worse. He now felt he was dying, but he retained his usual calmness, and to his friend Admiral Priestman, who assiduously attended him, he gave minute instructions respecting the place and manner of his interment. "There is a spot," said he, "near the village of Dauphiny ; this would suit me nicely : you know it well, for I have often said that I should like to be buried there. And let me beg of you, as you value your old friend, not to suffer any pomp to be used at my funeral ; nor any monument or monumental inscription whatsoever. to

mark where I am laid ; but lay me quietly in the earth, place a sun-dial over my grave, and let me be forgotten."

Soon afterwards, though retaining consciousness, Howard became too weak to converse. After a long silence, during which he seemed engaged in solemn thought, he recovered for a moment his presence of mind, and taking a letter, which he had recently received, out of his bosom—it referred to a supposed improvement in the condition of his son—he gave it to the Admiral to read, saying tenderly, "Is not this a comfort for a dying father?" One further request was made—namely, that when his body was committed to the grave his friend would read over it the beautiful burial service of the Church of England; and then he spoke no more. Falling into a state of unconsciousness, he passed away about eight o'clock in the morning of January 20th, 1790.

Thus died John Howard, the prison-reformer, the ardent, courageous, enthusiastic philanthropist. Thus died John Howard, fifteen hundred miles from his native land, his well-beloved home, and his many friends. His bed was surrounded by *strangers* ; *strangers* to his race, his language, his

religion ; and yet they were not strangers, for they were knit to him by the bonds of sympathy and affectionate esteem.

He who was the friend of all, says Hepworth Dixon, found friends in all. "Never perhaps had mortal man such funeral honours. Never before, perhaps, had a human being existed in whose demise so universal an interest could be felt. His death fell on the mind of Europe like an ominous shadow : the melancholy wail of grief which arose on the Dnieper, was echoed from the Thames, and soon re-echoed from the Tagus, the Neva, and the Dardanelles. Everywhere Howard had friends—more than could be thought, till death cut off restraint, and threw the flood-gates of sympathy wide open. Then the affluent tide rolled in like the dawn of a summer day. Cherson went into deep mourning for the illustrious stranger ; and there was hardly a person in the province who was not greatly affected on learning that he had chosen to fix his final resting-place on the Russian soil."

In one respect his dying wishes were neglected. The enthusiasm of the people insisted upon giving him a public funeral. The coffin was placed on a bier, drawn by six horses ; and the procession



consisted of the Prince of Moldavia, Admirals Priestman and Mordvinoff, all the generals and staff-officers of the garrison, the whole body of the magistrates and merchants of the province, a large body of cavalry, and an immense cavalcade of private persons, followed by upwards of three thousand of the poorer classes on foot.

Instead of the sun-dial, a small pyramid was erected over the great philanthropist's grave. The traveller in Russian-Tartary is still reminded by it how good and noble a man sleeps there, beneath the turf, his last long sleep ; and may be encouraged by his recollection of the work he did, to attempt himself some contribution to the welfare of mankind.

In England the intelligence of Howard's death produced a painful sensation, and a general desire was expressed to do honour to his memory. A large subscription was speedily raised for the erection of a marble statue, sculptured by Bacon, in St. Paul's Cathedral. It was the first national tribute to a national worthy erected within that splendid edifice, now consecrated by so many heroic associations ; and will long continue the *cynosure* of many grateful and admiring eyes.

The inscription on the monument runs as follows :—

THIS EXTRAORDINARY MAN HAD THE FORTUNE TO BE HONOURED,  
WHILST LIVING,

IN THE MANNER WHICH HIS VIRTUES DESERVED :

HE RECEIVED THE THANKS

OF BOTH HOUSES OF THE BRITISH AND IRISH PARLIAMENTS  
FOR HIS EMINENT SERVICES RENDERED TO HIS COUNTRY  
AND TO MANKIND.

OUR NATIONAL PRISONS AND HOSPITALS,  
IMPROVED UPON THE SUGGESTIONS OF HIS WISDOM,  
BEAR TESTIMONY TO THE SOLIDITY OF HIS JUDGMENT,  
AND TO THE ESTIMATION IN WHICH HE WAS HELD  
IN EVERY PART OF THE CIVILIZED WORLD,  
WHICH HE TRAVERSED TO REDUCE THE SUM OF  
HUMAN MISERY.

FROM THE THRONE TO THE DUNGEON, HIS NAME WAS MENTIONED  
WITH RESPECT, GRATITUDE, AND ADMIRATION.

HIS MODESTY ALONE

DEFEATED VARIOUS EFFORTS THAT WERE MADE DURING HIS LIFE  
TO ERECT THIS STATUE,

WHICH THE PUBLIC HAS NOW CONSECRATED TO HIS MEMORY.  
HE WAS BORN AT HACKNEY, IN THE COUNTY OF MIDDLESEX,  
SEPT. 11TH, MDCCXXVI.

THE EARLY PART OF HIS LIFE HE SPENT IN RETIREMENT,  
RESIDING PRINCIPALLY UPON HIS PATERNAL ESTATE,  
AT CARDINGTON, IN BEDFORDSHIRE :

FOR WHICH COUNTY HE SERVED THE OFFICE OF SHERIFF  
IN THE YEAR MDCCCLXXIII.

HE EXPIRED AT CHERSON, IN RUSSIAN-TARTARY, ON THE  
XXTH OF JAN. MDCCXC.,

A VICTIM TO THE PERILOUS AND BENEVOLENT ATTEMPT  
TO ASCERTAIN THE CAUSE OF, AND FIND AN EFFICACIOUS  
REMEDY FOR, THE PLAGUE.

HE TROD AN OPEN BUT UNFREQUENTED PATH TO IMMORTALITY  
IN THE ARDENT AND UNINTERMITTED EXERCISE OF  
CHRISTIAN CHARITY.

MAY THIS TRIBUTE TO HIS FAME

EXCITE AN EMULATION OF HIS TRULY GLORIOUS ACHIEVEMENTS.

Such is the story of John Howard. It is not necessary to set forth in formal phrase the lesson it embodies. Who can read a narrative so simple, and yet so touching, without being the better for it, and without resolving, in his heart of hearts, to follow, as best he can, in the footsteps of this hero of true charity? Remembering Milton's noble words :

"Good, the more  
Communicated, more abundant grows."









